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A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

OCTOBER, 1914

Songs of the Coast Dwellers

Constance Lindsay Skinner

The Chief's Prayer After the Salmon Catch—
Song of the Search—Song of the Conqueror of
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Our Contemporaries—Notes.

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OCTOBER, 1914

SONGS OF THE COAST-DWELLERS

THE CHIEF'S PRAYER AFTER THE SALMON CATCH



KIA-KUNAE, praise!

Thou hast opened thy hand among the stars,
And sprinkled the sea with food;
The catch is great; thy children will live.
See, on the roofs of the villages, the red meat
drying;

Another year thou hast encompassed us with life.

Praise! Praise! Kunae!

O Father, we have waited with shut mouths;

With hearts silent, and hands quiet,

Waited the time of prayer,

Lest with fears we should beset thee,

And pray the unholy prayer of asking.

We waited silently; and thou gavest life.

Oh, praise! Praise! Praise!

Open the silent mouths, the shut hearts, my tribe:

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Sing high the prayer of Thanksgiving,
The prayer He taught in the beginning to the Kwakiutl—
The good rejoicing prayer of thanks.
As the sea sings on the wet shore, when the ice thunders
back,
And the blue water floats again, warm, shining, living,
So break thy ice-bound heart, and the cold lip's silence—
Praise Kunae for life, as wings up-flying, as eagles to the sun.
Praise! Praise! Praise!

SONG OF THE SEARCH

I descend through the forest alone.
Rose-flushed are the willows, stark and a-quiver,
In the warm sudden grasp of Spring;
Like a woman when her lover has suddenly, swiftly taken
her.
I hear the secret rustle of the little leaves,
Waiting to be born.
The air is a wind of love
From the wings of eagles mating—
O eagles, my sky is dark with your wings!
The hills and the waters pity me,
The pine-trees reproach me.
The little moss whispers under my feet,
"Son of Earth, Brother,
Why comest thou hither alone?"

Song of the Search

Oh, the wolf has his mate on the mountain—
Where art thou, Spring-daughter?
I tremble with love as the reeds by the river,
I burn as the dusk in the red-tented west,
I call thee aloud as the deer calls the doe,
I await thee as hills wait the morning,
I desire thee as eagles the storm;
I yearn to thy breast as night to the sea,
I claim thee as the silence claims the stars.
O Earth, Earth, great Earth,
Mate of God and mother of me,
Say, where is she, the Bearer of Morning,
My Bringer of Song?
Love in me waits to be born,
Where is She, the Woman?

SONG OF THE CONQUEROR OF WOMEN

I am Mo-an-mat-ma, the Dandy.
My tribesmen, jealous, call me Many-Faces;
But the name over my house-door
Is Conqueror of Women.
The Moon-Woman's finger wrote it there.
I am as that red deer of stars
In the night's skyey forest,
Ever pursued by the tossing foam of maidens' love—
Froth from the mouths of hunting wolves!
(Ak! and some that be not maidens—

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My blind-eyed kinsmen, look to the little straying feet
Of such—and this—and that—um'm'm'm—
Look to it!) They follow me,
As the twinkling foam-track of hungry stars
Endlessly trails after him, the antlered one, the Red Star—
But takes him never! Aik-Ki-yi-y!

I am the Conqueror of Women!
My grass cap is set round with red breasts of red-breasted
woodpeckers;
My hair is sleek, black, long, bead-twined,
It flashes like the watered fins of Auch-Willo
Striking through the sea in the sun.
It is priceless as the fur of seals:
It is heaven-blossomed, like Yethel's wing.
I am tall, tall, tall and proud,
Proud, proud, proud, and strong;
Strong, strong, strong, like—
Like all the men of the Haidas;
Like all save me, who am tallest, proudest, strongest.
My moccasins are of white doe-skin much embroidered;
Five little rows of smallest white owl-feathers
Go round and round
The star-signs, the love-signs, worked in colored grasses.
(O my kinsman, O No-al-es, would you wed with Ho'g
tonight
If you knew—oh, la la!—who worked my moccasins?)

Song of the Conqueror of Women

I am the Conqueror of Women!
My body is swiftly strong as the storm in spring,
And beautifully large as the pale gold sand beneath the moon.
I am long-limbed and thewed like the cliff,
And curved in mighty curves like the shore about the sea.
My voice in love-making is as birds warring.
It is as sea-gulls shrieking, in the ears of women;
In anger—ai-k! how terrible in anger is my voice!
It splits the hearts of women, like Yethel pecking clam-shells.
Ai! They follow, follow my bright moccasins
Through the crooked trails of the woods.
They break my hunting scent; they scare my fishes—
Ak! ak! ak! love-seekers! husband-snatchers!
Foolish, foolish and unwise, you dance after a ghost!
I am Many-Faces, the Dandy; I wed none.
I wed none, I miss none. I lose none.
I am the Conqueror of Women!

SONG OF THE FULL CATCH

Here's good wind, here's sweet wind,
Here's good wind and my woman calls me!
Straight she stands there by the pine-tree,
Faithful waits she by the cedar,
She will smile and reach her hands
When she sees my thousand salmon!
Here's good wind and my woman calls me.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Here's clear water, here's swift water,
Here's bright water and my woman waits me!
She will call me from the sea's mouth—
Sweet her pine-bed when the morning
Lights my canoe and the river ends!
Here's good wind, here's swift water,
Strong as love when my woman calls me!

THE CHANGE-SONG

Death's first snows are drifting on my cheek,
Pale are my lips
As the kiss of Cin-Uza;
I lie low and still.
Near me crouch my silent kinsmen,
They hold the breath and wait the hour of wailing;
They have wrapped the scarlet mourning blanket
Round the shoulders of the oldest man;
He has taken their sorrow.
He droops at my door
Like a bleeding hawk where the eagles have battled.
He is so old he feels not any grief,
His heart is cold,
In his ears no sound is,
And in his eyes no light.
Therefore have my kinsmen given him their griefs—
Because the dawn leaps clear into their eyes,
Because the sound of women's feet

The Change-Song

Rustling on the cedar mats when the torch is blown
Calls sweetly to their ears,
And their hearts are beating for the hunt.
They may not bear the sorrow of my passing,
We have known strong joys together!

I take your loves, my kinsmen,
I leave with you no griefs!
Sing, my kinsmen, when ye swing me
To the topmost branches of the cedar.
Sweet-smelling arms of cedar, reach for me,
Tenderly receive me,
Hold me in the Last Caress under open sky!
Sing, my kinsmen, when the oldest man
Takes his lone trail through the forest.
He will wear no mourning-blanket when he comes again
tomorrow!
He will say, "Rejoice—
I have borne your grief afar,
I have buried it deep,
The place is not known."
The wind of your singing shall rock me
In the arms of my mother, the cedar.
Yet there is a sweeter song, my kinsmen;
It is the Change-Song of Supreme One.
I hear it now,
He chants it to my heart;
Because pale death has crossed my threshold, and has clasped
my hand.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

"Fear not," sings Supreme One;
"I am making pure, making pure,
I destroy not life,
I am Life-maker!"

The oldest man has entered the forest.
Ah! Ah! my kinsmen are wailing;
They saw me depart with Death
Into the White Change.
But I go on—and on!
And I sing the Change-Song of Supreme One:
Ha-k eohos la no-ya ai-a me la-la
Q' oalahag' i-h-e-e- la-wo!

SONG OF THE LITTLE SON

Hear me! I shout, "Ki-Ki-y!"
See me! I shake my little spear!
I am Leqa-a-to'q, the Little Son—
The strong little, swift little, fierce Little Son of the Chief.
Ki! Ki-Ki-y!
When I stamp my mighty little foot, my mother weeps;
She fears me, she trembles;
(Also old Bi'iq, my grandmother.)
The earth trembles, the sea shakes;
My little foot, stamping, rocks all the canoes of the world.
The clouds, like screaming windy birds,
Fly, fly before my little willow-bow.
The eagles screech, leaping to the pine-tops,

Song of the Little Son

When they see me fit my sparkling red-feathered little arrow
To my gleaming bowstring.
Running on the beach above the glistening bay,
For sport, I shake my tall little spear—
Ok—Ki! see the great shadows on the sea!
Kok-wats-Tyee, old Salmon-Chief,
Beckons with his tail all other fishes
And dives to the bottom of the world!
He fears me! Ki-Ki-Ki-y!

Tlet-la, the fisher, calls from his big canoe,
Where my father's twenty tribesmen paddle,
"O Leqa-a-to'q! Little Son! we pray thee,
No longer shake thy frightening spear!
If thou scare all the salmon from the sea,
How shall we eat dried fish when winter dances?
Thy tribe will die!"
Ai!—the sweet smoked fish! I hide my spear;
Once more the sea is full of salmon,
Swimming to the fishers' nets.
I run among the berry bushes,
Crying my fierce "Ki-Ki-y!"—
And laugh to see the wild wolves fleeing.

See Me! I jump the highest log—
Ki-Ki-Ki-y!—
My stuck-out little fingers pierced the sky!
"Leqa-a-to'q!" Who calls?
(Ho! 'tis but my trembling mother.)

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

When the beach crawled longly down
To the low sea, at morn,
With my sharp hunting little knife
I killed the fat Father of the Clams!
.....“*Leqa-a-a-to’q!*”... (Ho? ai-ai?...Angrily she calls
me!)

Farewell, slaves:
I hear the loud voice of the Great Chief’s Great Woman
calling,—
The high voice of the Great Chief’s great Little Son’s great
Mother.
“*Leqa-a-a-to’q—co-omes!*”
See Me!
Grinding, flashing, my long, white, many, fierce, little teeth,
I run, I run, I run—*Ki-Ki-Ki-y!*—
To eat my big little supper.

SONG OF WHIP-PLAITING

In the dawn I gathered cedar-boughs
For the plaiting of thy whip.
They were wet with sweet drops;
They still thought of the night.

All alone I shredded cedar-boughs,
Green boughs in the pale light,
Where the morning meets the sea,
And the great mountain stops.

Song of Whip-Plaiting

Earth was very still.

I heard no sound but the whisper of my knife,
My black flint knife.
It whispered among the white strands of the cedar,
Whispered in parting the sweet cords for thy whip.
O sweet-smelling juice of cedar—
Life-ooze of love!
My knife drips:
Its whisper is the only sound in all the world!

Finer than young sea-lions' hairs
Are my cedar-strands:
They are fine as little roots deep down.
(O little roots of cedar
Far, far under the bosom of Tsa-Kumts!—
They have plaited her through with love.)
Now, into my love-gift
Closely, strongly, I will weave them—
Little strands of pain!
Since I saw thee
Standing with thy torch in my doorway,
Their little roots are deep in me.

In the dawn I gathered cedar-boughs:
Sweet, sweet was their odor,
They were wet with tears!
The sweetness will not leave my hands,
No, not in salt sea-washings:

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Tears will not wash away sweetness.
I shall have sweet hands for thy service.

(Ah—sometimes—thou will be gentle?
Little roots of pain are deep, deep in me
Since I saw thee standing in my doorway.)

I have quenched thy torch—
I have plaited thy whip.
I am thy Woman!

SONG OF THE YOUNG MOTHER

M'-m'-m'-m'-n! N'-n'-n'-n'-m!
Ai-i-he-i—ah-o-he-a-i-ne—
Swing my chiefling fragrantly
On the cedar-branch.
Cedar, Cedar, tenderly
Sway to the singing wind.
Bright flying Wind with song in thy white throat,
And light in thy wide sea-eyes,
The sky's blue feathers on thy wing—
Oh blow, blow, gently, softly, Wind,
Rock my chiefling, Wind,
In his little woven cradle.

When thou wast still a seedling,
Deep in mine earth, months deep,

Song of the Young Mother

I sat in thy father's doorway making thy cradle.
At the first light, eager I rose to the weaving;
In the dusk my fingers still threaded,
Needing no light.
I remember my mother sat near me often, watching;
Sometimes weeping. Yes, she wept;
Yet answered not when I asked wherefor.
In the night thou hast waked me at his side—
Dancing, in thy dark house, to the doors that soon must open
On thy white shining dawn-shores of life:
And I have seen the Moon-Woman's round face
Laughing through the smoke-hole, mocking,
Pointing to thy empty cradle hanging.
Ai! but her smile grew kind! She said,
"Wait a little longer, impatient one;
When next my round face peeps through the smoke-hole,
I will seek him at your breast."
Ai-i-hi! Very precious is the man-child!
Ere it is born a woman loves it.
How cam'st thou here, little Chiefling?
A woman gave thee life!

Yes—my mother wept, watching me weave for thee.
And I have wept, too, a little.

Strange, that pain came with love;
I knew it not until thy father sought me.
Yet—what woman would cast love out?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Gladly in the dusk I waited him—
None told me, not my mother even, of the pang.
So my heart, joyous, sounded a song of drums,
Beating the loud wild march for his swift-trampling feet.
The breasts of love were as the eaves of a house,
Jutting through the red mists and the dusk of ending day,
Calling the hunter to enter to his rest.
The door trembled with strange winds—
He circled my house with the arms of strength,
And took me with weapons. Joy?
Ay. Yet I cried from the depths with a sudden deep cry,
And in grieving earth was the torch quenched.
. . . . Darkness. . . and his, his utterly, in that dark.
None had told me.
Nor that his strength would leap, rejoicing at my cry.

At dawn—it is our custom—I went forth alone
Into the mists that wrap the sleeping cedars
And droop to the pale unawakened sea.
Alone on the dawn's white rim I gathered cedar-boughs.
My tears fell, shining among the earth's bright drops;
For now I knew
Why the maiden plaits a whip of cedar-fibre,
To give into her husband's hand on her marriage-day.
Once I asked my father—it seemed so strange
A maid should weave and weave a rod for her own sorrow.
He laughed and said: "It is our custom; ay, an old custom—
I know not if it means aught now,

Song of the Young Mother

Or ever did have meaning."

My mother sat near. Ay, I have remembered that she spoke
not;

But, silently, in the shadow of his body, drooped her head.

Ay, 'tis old, the custom,

Old as earth is old;

Ancient as passion,

Pitiless as passion—

Ay, pitiless, pitiless, the earth-way for women!

Bitter it is, as the taste of bright sea-water,

That he, who takes the gift, and wields our weaving of
desire,

Knows not the meaning of the gift—nor can know ever!

Into the heedless hand of passion

We yield our power-of-pain.

.
It is the law of the earth-way.

So it is with birth-giving.

Aii-he! the mightier pang,

The mightier loving!

And thou and thy father, the two Strong Ones,

Glad, glad, of the woman's pain-cry!

M'-m'-m'-m'-n—Ai-i-he-i—

Sleepest thou, little Fatling?

Ay, thou didst long drink at my breast—

(But hast not drained it of love.)

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

*Cedar, Cedar, carefully
Guard my little brown cone
On thy earth-bending branch.
M'-m'-m'-m'-n—Ai-i-he-i—
Little life-bud on the bough!
Sleep, sleep, thou drowsy one—
Thou art guarded well.
Ay, rock, rock, safely, safely, little Man-Child—
A woman watches thee.*

NO ANSWER IS GIVEN

I am Ah-woa-te, the Hunter.
I met a maiden in the shadow of the rocks;
Her eyes were strange and clear,
Her fair lips were shaped like the bow of dawning.
I asked her name,
Striking my spear in the deep earth for resting.

"I am Kantlak, a maiden, named for the Morning.
On the mountain-top I heard two eagles talking—
The word was Love.
They cried it, beating their wings on each other
Until they bled; and she fell,
Yet, falling, still weakly cried it
To him soaring: and died.
I came to a mossy low valley of flowers.

No Answer is Given

There I saw Men-iak, the white grouse,
(White with chaste dreams, like the Spring Moon, fairer
than flowers).

Through the forest a dark bird swooped, with fierce eyes,
And Men-iak flew down to it.

Her white breast is red-dyed, she lies on the moss;
Yet faintly cries the same strange word.

Hunter, will you come to my little fire and tell me
What Love is?"

I could not see the maiden's face clearly, for the dusk,
Where she sat by her small fire—only her eyes.

In the little flicker I saw her feet; they were bare—
Tireless, slim brown feet.

I saw how fair her lips were—

I drew nearer to cast my log on the fire. I said:

"Maiden, I am the Hunter.

When dusk ends the chase I leave the Mighty Killing.

Far or near, where gleams some little fire,

I grope through the forest with my heavy log;

Till I find one by the fire, sitting alone without fuel.

I cast my log gladly into the fire—thus.

It grips, the flames mount, the warmth embraces.

"Almost I can see your face, Woman;
The bow of your fair lips is hot with speeded arrows,
Your strange clear eyes have darkened.
Fear not—our fire will outlast the dark."

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

"Hunter, what of the cold on the bleak hillside
When the log burns gray, and the fire is ashes?"
I replied, "I have never seen this:
When the fire burns low I am asleep."
She said: "What of me, if I sleep not, and see the ashes?"
I yawned: I said, "I know not;
I wake in the sun and go forth."

The bow of her lips was like the moon's cold circle.
She said, "Hunter, you have told me of Love!"
"It may be so," I answered. I wished to sleep.
She said, "Already it is ashes."
I looked and saw that her face was gray,
As if the wind had blown the ashes over it.
I was angry; I said, "Better you had slept."
She said, "Yes—but I lie bleeding on the moss,
Crying this word."
I answered, "This is so; but wherefore?" and asked, idly,
"Wherefore remember him who brought to your lone little
fire
The log that now is ashes?"
She shivered in the cold dawn;
I saw that her eyes were darker than shadows.
Her fair mouth was like my perfect bow,
But I could fit no more arrows to it.

She said, "Hunter, see how gray are these rocks
Where we have sheltered our brief night."

No Answer is Given

I looked—they were ashen.
She said, "See how they come together here—and here—
As the knees, the breast, the great brow, the forgotten eyes,
Of a woman,
Sitting, waiting, stark and still,
And always gray;
Though hunters camp each night between her knees,
And little fires are kindled and burned out in her hollows."
It was so; the mountain was a stone woman sitting.
Kantlak said, "She remembers him who turned her fire to
ashes;
She waits to know the meaning of her waiting—
Why the love that wounded her can never be cast out."

I asked idly, "Who will tell her?"—
And laughed, for the sun was up. I reached for my arrows;
I drew my strong spear from the deep earth by her feet.
Kantlak looked up to the other gray face, and said,
"No answer is given."
Down to the cold white endless sea-shore
Slowly she went, with bend head.
A young deer cast its leaping shadow on the pool.
I ran upon the bright path, swaying my spear.

Constance Lindsay Skinner.

IN THE LABORATORY

So you have lost your keen Italian craft—
You, sir, with the pale-blue steady eyes.
The restless liquids changing in a wink,
The elemental catch-and-cling, the flames,
The quiet cultures hatching hour by hour—
All these are not the secret Kiss-of-Death?
You do not follow me? It's just as well—
I only muse on fashions of your trade.
For you, the present mode's enough; for you
The rose-red liquor of the Borgia's feast,
The ointment on the blade at Elsinore,
The cobra-touch of the Byzantine ring—
Crude things they seem, I take it, in your eyes.....
And yet they had their midnight will of life.

But you have lost the pose, the furtive air.
That devilish old theatric charlatan
Had much the better of you, sir, in style.
This same clear glass—he used it for a gaze
That hoped to glimpse the cloudy shape of Fate.
You spread a drop upon a slide; stain it
Some hue that pierces evil things alone—
(Magic in that? A little, if you like)—
And balance in its groove this paltry drop.
The light gleams through it to the lens above.
No, I can't look, sir.....It's my life, you know.

Give me a moment. Let me prattle on.
What's this? And this? Grave issues, every one.
This tells you if a beam of ribboned steel
Will hold some daring tower against the sky.
These tubes?—the milk tests: ah, the little lives
That hang in peril till you mark them safe.
And this?—a matter of your own research.
You are still curious? A mere chance, you think—
I understand. Into the springs of life,
The primal secrets and the hidden wells,
You peer when trade is dull. You tear apart
The final atoms in their whirling dance,
And trust they may not find their way again.
The mind of God is swift. And so is Death.

No, sir, not yet. The first look must be mine.
How should it stand? If the round discs are clear—
Fair winds, and hope, and lengthening days, you say?
Good! Fear, sir, is a grisly thing to feel.
If they be tinged with violet, then the plague—
The pale, slow plague—is rotting out my life.
Suppose I dash the thing aside, and slay
The messenger of evil ere he speak?
No, no!—a moment more. That was my Fear
Who sometimes cries before I crush him down.
Now I will know. The violet shade, you say,
Is the death sign; the white is innocent.
Well, now the hoary wings of doom are poised

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Above me, and I feel their fluttering.
Tomorrow, and the fostering sun, the flowers,
The kisses and the songs, the green spring roads,
And all my soul's new fortunes and desires,
Tremble across this disc of light. Ah, God!
Some brandy! Sweet Life! The glass is clear.
Thomas Wood Stevens

TO J. L.

Often within the house where we have met
You are an aching presence and a pain,
The cruel obsession of a tortured brain
With only you and loss of you beset.
Each room where you have moved is a regret;
In every spot some self of you is slain.
And "Oh," I question, "must he die again,
And die a thousand deaths till I forget!"

But when I plunge into the moving street,
Into the vital sunlight and keen air,
When face to face and life to life I meet
My living brothers, all the old despair
Falls from me; in the faces that I greet,
And in the quickened heart-throbs, you are there.

A GIRL STRIKE-LEADER

A white-faced, stubborn little thing
Whose years are not quite twenty years;
Eyes steely now and done with tears,
Mouth scornful of its suffering—

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

The young mouth!—body virginal
Beneath the cheap, ill-fitting suit;
A bearing quaintly resolute;
A flowering hat, satirical.

A soul that steps to the sound of the fife
And banners waving red to war;
Mystical, knowing scarce wherefore—
A Joan in a modern strife.

CITY OF HUGE BUILDINGS

City of huge buildings into which men have poured their
souls,
City of innumerable schools where little children are taught
and cared for,
City of the great University, discussing solemn and learned
questions,
City of well-dressed, beautiful women, sleek, satisfied, sure
of their clothes and of themselves,
And their husbands sleek and satisfied also:
I, a common prostitute, in the wan morning buying cocaine,
Ask you the meaning of it all.

Florence Kiper Frank

ON THE JAIL STEPS

I've won the race.
Young man, I'm new!
Old Sallow-face,
Good luck to you!

I've turned about,
And paid for sin.
And you come out,
As I go in.

Ten years! but mark,
I am free, free!
Ten years of dark
Shall gather me.

My wife—long-while
She wept her pain.
She cannot smile;
She weeps again.

My little one
Shall know my call.
Child is there none,
For sin grows tall.

Now who are you,
Spar of hell's flood?
And who, and who,
But your own blood?

A STATUE IN A GARDEN

I was a goddess ere the marble found me.

Wind, wind, delay not!

Waft my spirit where the laurel crowned me!

Will the wind stay not?

Then tarry, tarry, listen, little swallow!

An old glory feeds me—

I lay upon the bosom of Apollo!

Not a bird heeds me.

For here the days are alien. Oh, to waken

Mine, mine, with calling!

But on my shoulders bare, like hopes forsaken,

The dead leaves are falling.

The sky is gray and full of unshed weeping

As dim down the garden

I wait and watch the early autumn sweeping.

The stalks fade and harden.

The souls of all the flowers afar have rallied.

The trees, gaunt, appalling,

Attest the gloom, and on my shoulders pallid

The dead leaves are falling.

Agnes Lee

RETROSPECT

In your arms was still delight,
Quiet as a street at night;
And thoughts of you, I do remember,
Were green leaves in a darkened chamber,
Were dark clouds in a moonless sky.
Love, in you, went passing by,
Penetrative, remote, and rare,
Like a bird in the wide air,
And, as the bird, it left no trace
In the heaven of your face.
In your stupidity I found
The sweet hush after a sweet sound.
All about you was the light
That dims the graying end of night;
Desire was the unrisen sun,
Joy the day not yet begun,
With tree whispering to tree,
Without wind, quietly.
Wisdom slept within your hair,
And Long-Suffering was there,
And, in the flowing of your dress,
Undiscerning Tenderness.
And when you thought, it seemed to me,
Infinitely, and like a sea,
About the slight world you had known
Your vast unconsciousness was thrown

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O haven without wave or tide!
Silence, in which all songs have died!
Holy book, where hearts are still!
And home at length under the hill!
O mother quiet, breasts of peace,
Where love itself would faint and cease!
O infinite deep I never knew,
I would come back, come back to you,
Find you, as a pool unstirred,
Kneel down by you, and never a word,
Lay my head, and nothing said,
In your hands, ungarlanded;
And a long watch you would keep;
And I should sleep, and I should sleep!

Rupert Brooke

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

THE AUDIENCE

I



HAVE protested in private, and I now protest more openly, against the motto upon the cover of POETRY. The artist is *not* dependent upon his audience. This sentence is Whitman tired. You have only to compare Whitman to my mutton-headed ninth cousin, or to any other American of his time who had the "great audience," to see the difference of result.

And for all that, Whitman was not such a poet as Dante, who never gave way, and from whom we have the tradition of an answer more becoming to genius: "*Quem stulti magis odissent.*" When they asked him who was wisest in the city he answered, "He whom the fools hate worst."

The artist is not dependent upon the multitude of his listeners. Humanity is the rich effluvium, it is the waste and the manure and the soil, and from it grows the tree of the arts. As the plant germ seizes upon the noble particles of the earth, upon the light-seeking and the intrepid, so does the artist seize upon those souls which do not fear transfusion and transmutation, which dare become the body of the god.

I ask you, had Synge an audience in his life-time? He was hounded or despised by a half-educated, Zoroastrian rabble of "respectable" people more stupid and sodden than is to be found even in America. He had a scant handful

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of friends. Had Dante the popular voice? He had his youthful companionship with Guido, and correspondence with a man from Pistoja and with the latinist De Virgilio.

Must we restrict this question to poets? I ask the efficient man in any department of life. Can we have no great inventors without a great audience for inventors? Had Curie a great audience? Had Ehrlich for his bacilli? Can we have no great financier without a great audience? Had the savior of the world a great audience? Did he work on the magazine public?

Is there any use carrying it further? Did not the disciples of Confucius beg him to do something popular? Have we not his imperturbable answer? "So you wish me to become famous—shall I take up archery or charioteering? I shall take up charioteering."

It is true that the great artist has in the end, always, his audience, for the Lord of the universe sends into this world in each generation a few intelligent spirits, and these ultimately manage the rest. But this rest—this rabble, this multitude—does *not* create the great artist. They are aimless and drifting without him. They dare not inspect their own souls.

It is true that the great artist has always a great audience, even in his life time; but it is not the *vulgo* but the spirits of irony and of destiny and of humor, sitting within him.

Ezra Pound.

II

Controversy is good for the soul, and the magazine which expresses but one opinion is doomed.

Of course, as Mr. Pound says, there is a sense in which a "great audience" may be a very small one. That was hardly Whitman's meaning, however, nor is it the hint we intend to convey by our motto. Modern inventions, forcing international travel, inter-racial thought, upon the world, have done away with Dante's little audience, with his contempt for the crowd, a contempt which, however, disregarded the fact that his epic, like all the greatest art, was based upon the whole life of his time, the common thought and feeling of all the people. No small group today can suffice for the poet's immediate audience, as such groups did in the stay-at-home aristocratic ages; and the greatest danger which besets modern art is that of slighting the "great audience" whose response alone can give it authority and volume, and of magnifying the importance of a coterie.

In an essay on *The Bigness of the World* (*Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1911) I discussed this question of the poet and his audience at greater length than POETRY has space for. The concluding paragraphs were:

Great art, the highest art, comes only when profound energy of creation meets profound energy of sympathy. The leader must have his army behind him, the *vates* must hear an outcry of passion and understanding from all his world. Of old, when the poet spoke for a few, the response of the few was enough. To-day, when he must speak for the many, the many must hear him, must not only hear but understand him in their profoundest secret instincts of sympathy or rebellion; else he can not utter

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the truth that is in him, and modern democracy must go uninspired.

Thus we shall hardly have our *vates* until our huge heterogeneous crowd becomes as aware of the spirit as it is today of the flesh, as keen for truth and beauty as it is today for comfort. . . . The inventors have had their world behind them; modern democracy is still giving them its commands. Science takes no step forward that the man in the street does not know: he thrills over X-rays and radium, he is eager to test the mono-rail, he jokes about the inhabitants of Mars. In this direction lies increase of comfort and knowledge; here the creative energy of our age meets equal energy of sympathy, and each day records a new miracle. And all these are glorious deeds, necessary to the making of a larger world. We live in a great age, but a greater age must come.

Already there are many signs of an awakening of spiritual consciousness in the crowd—confused and scattered signs of far-blown sympathies, exaltations, ideals. Democracy is becoming awake and aware, is discovering a deeper need than the need of food and raiment. At present this instinct is vague and formless, voiced in dim and clouded questionings, almost world-wide political doubt, spiritual unrest. The new democracy must grope and wander, lingering among vast uncharted uncertainties. It must search long for its poet-prophet who shall sing the old era away and usher in the new. And when he comes he must be of spiritual stature great enough to stand fitly on mountain-tops and speak for a world more vast than man has ever known.

Art is not an isolated phenomenon of genius, but the expression of a reciprocal relation between the artist and his public. Like perfect love, it can be supreme only when the relation is complete. There is a magic in it beyond the reach of reason, a magic which Whitman felt when he wrote the sentence printed on our cover. Science is explaining more and more the reactions and relations of matter, of life. It becomes increasingly clear that nothing can stand alone, genius least of all.

H. M.

NATIONALISM IN ART

American and English critics do love to talk about American art. They tell us just what it ought to be about, and how it should be presented. They are constantly on the *qui vive* to detect foreign ideas and alien interests, and even if forced to admit good work in something possessing these baneful qualities, they are sure to heave a sigh, and deplore the fact that it is "un-American."

It would seem that the only thing to cure critics of this attitude would be a course in psychology. It is not so surprising that English critics, ignorant of our civilization, and of the vastness of our country and its many and various intellectual reactions, should erect a spurious ideal of what literature here should be. But that our own critics should persist in demanding a narrow and purely surface "Americanism" is more astonishing.

To their minds "Americanism" would seem to consist of a mixture of trade-unionism, slums (neither of which phenomena, it may be remarked, is peculiar to this country), polyethnic factories, and limitless prairies peopled by heroic cow-boys. This would appear to be a rather narrow range in which to confine the art of a great nation. For we are a great nation, and that supremely interesting thing, a nation in the making. Is our lack of a correspondingly great art due to our youth, or to other, and more artificial, causes?

To all people who find art a worthy preoccupation and endeavor, this question is one of paramount interest. What can we do to get ourselves worthily down on canvas or

paper? How can we produce that concourse of great artists which the critics are always fuming at us for not possessing? How angry they would be if we suggested that they were one of the obstacles which stand in the way, that this constant talk and urging on the subject of "Americanism" was one of the surest ways not to get it. We have gone daft in this country on the "social," we speak of people as though their only value were in the aggregate. We pounce upon individualism with jeers, and sneers, and misunderstanding. Universal suffrage works as badly in the domain of the arts as it does in Wall Street. In fact, it undoubtedly works worse. For there are many more able business men than there are able artists, so the public may very well be supposed to have an apter judgment in business affairs than in letters. Not that the public is not a good judge of results. The "man in the street" can see the difference between a great financier and the keeper of the corner grocery. And great artists attain their rank through universal (though not always popular) opinion. Certainly the public sees results, but the public is not a very good judge of how results are to be come by.

Art is a thing of the individual. It is all very well to group by-gone artists into schools for class-room convenience. It amuses a certain type of mind to fasten tags upon living men. It interests readers and stimulates their curiosity to line artists up in opposing factions like the two sides of a base-ball game. But these are purely exterior phenomena and leave the profound individuality of the artist untouched. So shy and unaccountable is the creative impulse that it has

so far defied the researches of psychologists. It depends upon a number of physical and mental phenomena, worked upon by environment. And it is this subtle, elusive, and awe-inspiring thing which the critics are so anxious to push here and there!

A nation is its character, just as a man is. Personality is made up of all sorts of traits and habits, cross-sectioning and inhibiting each other. It is in its essence, in the kind of character a man has, that his national character comes out. It is stupid and impertinent to be forever telling a man to try and be someone else. The American artist must first of all be encouraged to be himself, and by being himself openly and fearlessly he will also be entirely American. In fact, he could not help it if he would. We are a nation with marked characteristics; there is no lack of national flavor about us. That we do not get it into our literature is because of another national trait—we are conventional, hopelessly, timidly so. All the intellectual revolts and movements come from abroad. But, and here is the point, American artists living abroad are usually in the van of such movements. Whistler led one of the most important artistic reforms of our time, and one of the best known of the French symbolists is Stuart Merrill, an American. No, we are not stupid, and not incapable of the seething intellectual force which makes for change, but here at home we live in an atmosphere of stuffy monotony, and the critics, who should be our teachers and helpers, are forever asking us to mold ourselves on one pattern.

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No other country has treated its artists so. Other countries have realized that in the richness and many-sidedness of artistic achievement lies the greatness of national artistic life.

Musicians speak of the "attack" with which a singer takes a note. National character is shown in this quality of "attack," the way an artist takes a subject, the fluid play of his personality about it. Let us show a little more trust in our artists, let us believe that they know what is good for themselves better than we do. And when an American artist, with all the force and vitality of his go-ahead American nature, braves the scorn of the critics and lays a beautiful pomegranate before us, let us not weep or scold because it is not a rice pudding.

Poe and Walt Whitman share the honor of being America's greatest poets. And what a difference! How unlike are the subjects which inspired them, and how utterly unlike their forms of "attack." But it is quite obvious to the most casual reader that neither of them could have come out of any country except America. It is the fashion to call Poe an exotic. Why? Because there has only been one of him? Could he have been an Englishman, a Frenchman, a German? Clearly he has none of the national traits of these, or any other foreign countries. It must be then because he is a genius that we fail to see the American in him. Is it not a little sad that genius is so rare with us that when it appears we dub it "exotic?"

No, what the American artist needs to be told is to be himself. And to spare no study to present that self as it

really is. If a poet chooses the ancient Aztec civilization as the background for a poem, it may be as purely "American" a production as though he had laid his scene in the lower East Side of New York at the present day. If he chooses to people the Kentucky woods with fairies, who are we to bar out the fine play of his imagination as alien to our national temper? And is it not a little ludicrous, perhaps pathetic, to have a reviewer upbraid him because he has not chosen to write about the laborers on the adjacent farms? What reviewers of that type do not understand is, that neither poet nor painter chooses his subject. It is the subject which chooses him; he can no more help his preferences and inspirations than he can help the shape of his head.

These unscientifically trained reviewers seem to think that a man decides what is to ignite his creative impulse as wilfully and calmly as he would choose a number at a roulette table; and, the subject taken, they speak as though the rest were chance. A profound ignorance of psychic laws is responsible for these ideas. The fact would seem to be just the reverse. An artist cannot choose his number, but he can learn to spin his wheel. We are afraid to go to school lest we cease to be ourselves. A strong man gains an added sense of power by everything he learns. Every great artist has spent a life of laborious learning. He has mastered his technique with infinite pains, and by so doing has been able to fling his personality unimpeded before the world. The only motto for a serious artist is: **WORK!** Instead of begging us to be what we are not, the critics

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should urge us to be more fully what we are. Only so will they hasten the day when America will have the great artists for which she clamors.

Amy Lowell.

REVIEWS

Des Imagistes: An Anthology. The Glebe: A. & C. Boni.

Imagism is essentially a graphic art, and, like the finest etching, print or wood-cut, depends upon a highly cultivated state of appreciation in the observer. It is not an art of the naive or unsophisticated. A great many of the classical poems of the Japanese are also graphic in the sense in which I use it here. Their poems exist independently, it is true, of the pictures that they were designed to accompany, or that were made, in their turn, to complete the text of the poet; but the spirit of the poem was based upon this dual appreciation. In other words, it was based upon a mental image to which more than one sense, or more than one art-sense, was contributory. The fact that poet and painter played into each other's hands, so to speak, was due to a more general culture in art than many of us in the west possess, and it was due also to the non-imitative quality of the respective arts. Perhaps this is one reason why the visual element, which plays an important part in the poems in this volume, is not likely to find ready appreciation or understanding.

"An Image," Mr. Pound says, "is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time."

The moon rose full, and the women stood as though around an altar.

How shall I find the white flower
That resembles the hoar-frost?
When I think I have come upon it—
It is only a flake of white crystal
That melts in my fingers.

From the Japanese.

In several brief poems by Mr. Pound in this anthology the Image would not exist without this contributory sense of delicate vision:

Be in me as the eternal moods
 of the bleak wind, and not
As transient things are—
 gaiety of flowers.
Have me in the strong loneliness
 of sunless cliffs
And of gray waters.
 Let the gods speak softly of us
In days hereafter,
 The shadowy flowers of Orcus
Remember Thee.

O fan of white silk,
 clear as frost on the grass-blade.
You also are laid aside.
The petals fall in the fountain,
 the orange-colored rose-leaves,
Their ochre clings to the stone.

Mr. Aldington also gives a delightful visual impression in *Au Vieux Jardin*, which one New York reviewer frankly finds ridiculous; no doubt because a delicate combination of color could never set *him* "nigh to weeping!" And the same reviewer objects to "the delicate artificiality, the delicate antiquity, the delicate futility" of the imagist poems. But

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there are hands of otherwise very worthy people to which one would not confide the delicate artificiality, the delicate antiquity, the delicate futility of an Etruscan vase.

"But the Etruscan vase was not futile, but useful," the reviewer would probably object.

"Yes, but would not the most vulgar manufactured china-jug serve as well?" he might be answered.

The futility, after all, is in the impossibility of imposing a selective choice on the naturally unselective.

Modernity, moreover, is not objective, not a matter of time and place. A sparrow hopping on the lawn in London appeals to this reviewer; but substitute Athens for London, and his sense of modernity would be outraged.

There is much individual variety in the expression of the eleven poets represented in this anthology, but all the poems are more or less bound together by certain tendencies which it is unnecessary to indicate here, as the principles of Imagism have been set forth at some length in this magazine and about three-fourths of the poems included were first published in *POETRY*. The collection of the poems in a single volume is valuable as affording a concentrative expression of the group, and an appended bibliography increases its value for the collector. *A. C. H.*

Sonnets From The Patagonian, by Donald Evans. Marie Claire.

Saloon Sonnets With Sunday Flutings, by Allen Norton. Marie Claire.

There are signs of a late grafting of the spirit of the eighteen-nineties upon certain young poets of the United States. Of course we have had earlier and more authentic indications of that spirit in poets whose work is based upon the artistic methods of the nineties, but the grafting of which I speak represents rather a tendency to imitate only that phase of the cult whose literary trademark is the sophistication of wickedness.

Curiously enough, this phase seems to have fastened itself particularly upon New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. Chicago, with the exception of a few cases transferred to Greenwich Village, seems to have escaped this light attack of the measles. I was told lately of an argumentative contest between two young poets, each of whom desired to prove that he was wickedder than the other! To a remark that the out-worn, very much *passé* desire to *épater les bourgeois* was no doubt at the root of the matter, a friend responded that these young men did not, indeed, care so much to shock others as to shock themselves; and the remarkable fact was that they succeeded so well!

Not a little of this foolish and rather wasteful child's play, in combination with certain post-impressionist leanings, is found in the two volumes of poems by Mr. Donald Evans and Mr. Allen Norton.

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Mr. Evans has a decided gift for unique and memorable phrasing derived from a concise perception of the complexity of a mood. Many of these phrases occur in poems that have been quoted by reviewers for the sake of the supposed jolt they would give the public, but there are other poems less obvious in intention and more subtle; and there is much natural vigor in his work. Rhythmically, his sonnets are rather monotonous. Mr. Norton's sonnets are even more metronomically regular, and his impressions are choppy and hurried, giving the effect of confusion rather than of clarity. In many cases he kills his images before they are born. His *Sunday Flutings* are more musical; but he, even more than Mr. Evans, seems to be still *fin de siècle*. A. C. H.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

In addition to much good criticism, non-academic and personal, The St. Louis *Mirror* often publishes poetry that deserves more than casual recognition. In the *Spoon River Anthology*, Mr. Webster Ford unites something of the feeling and method of the Greek Anthology with a trace of the spirit of Villon; but the "tradition" has only served to lead him to a little cemetery in a small town—it might be any small town—in the United States, where death reveals life in a series of brief tragic epitaphs. We regret that we have space to quote only a few of the poems:

Our Contemporaries

OLLIE M'GEE

Have you seen walking through the village
A man with downcast eyes and haggard face?
That is my husband who by secret cruelty,
Never to be told, robbed me of my youth and my beauty
Till at last wrinkled and with yellow teeth,
And with broken pride and shameful humility,
I sank into the grave.
But what think you gnaws at my husband's heart?
The face of what I was, the face of what he made me!
These are driving him to the place where I lie.
In death, therefore, I am avenged.

DOC HILL

I went up and down the streets
Here and there by day and night,
Through all hours of the night caring for the poor who were
sick.
Do you know why?
My wife hated me, my son went to the dogs.
And I turned to the people and poured out my love to them.
Sweet it was to see the crowds about the lawns on the day of my
funeral,
And hear them murmur their love and sorrow.
But oh, dear God, my soul trembled, scarcely able
To hold to the railing of the new life,
When I saw Em Stanton behind the oak tree
At the grave.
Hiding herself, and her grief!

THE HILL

Where are Elmer, Herman, Bert, Tom and Charley,
The weak of will, the strong of arm, the clown, the boozier, the
fighter?
All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

One passed in a fever,
One was burned in a mine,
One was killed in a brawl,
One died in a jail,
One fell from a bridge toiling for children and wife—
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

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Where are Ella, Kate, Mag, Lizzie and Edith
The tender heart, the simple soul, the loud, the proud, the happy
 one?—
All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

One died in shameful child-birth,
One of a thwarted love.
One at the hands of a brute in a brothel,
One of a broken pride, in the search for heart's desire,
One, after life in far away London and Paris,
Was brought to her little space by Ella and Kate and Mag—
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Uncle Isaac and Aunt Emily,
And old Towny Kincaid and Sevigne Houghton,
And Major Walker who had talked
With venerable men of the revolution?—
All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

They brought them dead sons from the war,
And daughters whom life had crushed,
And their children fatherless, crying,
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where is Old Fiddler Jones
Who played with life all his ninety years,
Braving the sleet with bared breast,
Drinking, rioting, thinking neither of wife nor kin,
Nor gold, nor love, nor heaven?
Lo! he babbles of the fish-frys of long ago,
Of the horse-races of long ago at Clary's Grove,
Of what Abe Lincoln said
One time at Springfield.

“Vorticism” is the latest official title of the latest literary and artistic revolution in England, and *Blast*, a quarterly published by John Lane, with a bright cerise cover that makes one feel as if the outer cuticle had been removed, is its official organ. There is much entertainment to be had from the

various Manifestos, tables of Curses, and equally profane Benedictions included, and no small food for thought—if thought is the product of such pre-digested nutriment. I say pre-digested advisedly, for the quarterly represents the height of sophistication, and it is only those who are, if possible, more sophisticated who will find about *Blast* something of the wan excitement of Fourth of July Fireworks on the day after the Fourth. There is no doubt that its authors have found great joy in its creation, and this, in the face of the complete inertia which surrounded them, must have been well worth the effort. As they prayed for a breeze that would “stiffen the back of the Serpentine and put aquatic steel half-way down the Manchester Canal,” let us hope that the prompt fulfilment of their wish by the obliging European war-lords may not postpone the second number of the quarterly.

The present number includes, in addition to Manifestos, Reviews, Notes, etc., etc., a play by Wyndham Lewis, a story by Rebecca West, the first chapters of a serial by Ford Madox Hueffer, poems by Ezra Pound, reproductions of drawings and sculpture by futuristic artists.

A COMMENT

*By the Other Woman in Hueffer's poem On Heaven in
Poetry for June 1914*

For those who have won earthly love
Immortal joys are spread;
Kind God, hush thou my soul to sleep
When I am dead.

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NOTES

Miss Constance Skinner, who was born in British Columbia, was brought up among the Indian tribes of the Northwest. Her father, a government official, used to take the child with him on his rounds, so that she became friendly with many primitive bards. When she began to interpret their work in English, the themes found their own form, dictated by the poet's feeling for the old rhythms, her intimate knowledge of Indian love and character gained through early association and impression, and her later study of material gleaned at first hand.

Her first Indian poem, *Song of Whip-Plaiting*, proved, on analysis, to be accompanied by a primitive musical theme, something more than a monotonous chant, which filled in the verbal pauses in places and marked out the changes of mood and sentiment and of the beat and tempo. The *diminuendo* and *crescendo*, the *rallentando* and *accelerando*, the rest, *staccato*, *rubato* and *sostenuto* are clearly perceptible to the ear in all the songs; but are most easily followed by the layman in the *Chief's Prayer after the Salmon-catch*, which—of its own initiative, without design—achieved the form and beat of the *Bilqula Death-Song* in the original tongue. The *Song of Full Catch* was suggested by the Canadian halfbreed voyageur song, *V'la le bon Vent*, and follows its melody, which seems more Indian than Gallic. The author says:

Primitive song was the spontaneous utterance of feeling. Intellectuality and learning were negligible. The spoken lines were in broken metre, and the idea, which was an emotional rather than an intellectual conception, was completed by the accompanying

instrumental theme. It was strongly endowed with the primal and essential qualities of poetry, viz., passion and aspiration: the lifting of the heart from the visible to that invisible of which it is symbolical.

We add a few notes explanatory of tribal customs on which these poems are founded:

Chief's Prayer. With this tribe no prayer but one of thanksgiving is ever offered to Supreme One. They say, "He has all wisdom and knows what we need and we cannot advise Him; but the praise of those who know He is their Father and trust Him is pleasing to Him." Kindness is the social and individual ideal of the tribe.

Ku-na-e is pronounced in three syllables, with the accent on the second.

The Search. The lover wanders in the forest asking the earth to show him where love is. Earth reveals to him the name of the maiden he desires, so he returns to her at dusk with the sanction of all Nature to give force to his wooing.

The Change Song. Some tribes bury their dead on the highest tree tops. They bend down the tops with ropes, etc., fasten the body thereon in an open coffin, then let the trees leap skyward again with the departed. They wrap the red-dyed mourning blanket round the oldest man and he goes alone secretly into the woods and buries the "grief of the tribe" in a place known only to himself. In the way of nature he will die next, supposedly, and then the "grief" will be utterly unknown: also Age bears the grief because it has no longer any thrilling joys to be clouded.

Whip-plaiting. In some tribes the lover brings a torch at night and sets it, alight, in the sand floor within his beloved's doorway. If she accepts him she quenches the flame in the earth and goes to him in the darkness: The cedar-tree is literally the tree of life, supplying fibre for weaving baskets, cradles, mats, blankets, whips, the ornaments used in religious ceremonies and even food in fish famine, besides drooping boughs on which to hang babies in cradles for the wind to rock them.

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Thomas Wood Stevens, poet, playwright, etcher and maker of pageants, lived until recently in Chicago, going thence to Pittsburgh, where he is now in charge of the Theatre of the School of Applied Design of the Carnegie Institute. Mr. Stevens has printed several small books of verse, among them the poetic pageants, *Illinois*, *The Old Northwest*, *Independence Day*, and *The Daimio's Head*.

Mr. Rupert Brooke is a young English poet who has recently crossed this country after a long sojourn in Tahiti and other South Sea islands. He is represented in *Georgian Verse*, and, together with Mr. Abercrombie and one or two other poets, he publishes, at irregular intervals, *New Numbers*, in which *Retrospect* will soon appear.

Florence Kiper Frank (Mrs. Jerome N. Frank) is a young Chicago poet who has published verse and prose in various magazines.

Agnes Lee (Mrs. Otto T. Freer) is well known to readers of POETRY.

BOOKS RECEIVED

My Lady's Book, by Gerald Gould. Mitchell Kennerley.

The Sea is Kind, by T. Sturge Moore. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Medoc in the Moor, by Georgia Willis Read. Sherman, French & Co.

The Simple Hound, Poems of a Lifetime, by Emily Dickinson. Little, Brown & Co., Boston.

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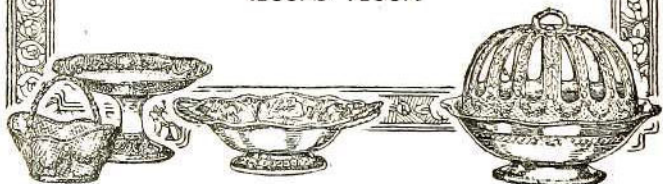
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Edited by Harriet Monroe

NOVEMBER, 1914

The Metal Checks . . . Louise Driscoll

The Chant of the Shroud Maker . . .

Marian Ramié

If War Is Right . . . Parke Farley

The Hero . . . John Russell McCarthy

The Bombardment . . . Amy Lowell

The Camp Follower . . . Maxwell Bodenheim

Among the Red Guns . . . Carl Sandburg

Fallen . . . Alice Corbin

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NOVEMBER, 1914

POEMS OF WAR

THE METAL CHECKS

[The scene is a bare room, with two shaded windows at the back, and a fireplace between them with a fire burning low. The room is furnished scantily with a few plain chairs, and a rough wooden table on which are piled a great many small wooden trays. The Counter, who is Death, sits at the table. He wears a loose gray robe, and his face is partly concealed by a gray veil. He does not look at The Bearer, but works mechanically and speaks in a monotonous tone. The Bearer is the World, that bears the burden of War. He wears a soiled robe of brown and green and he carries on his back a gunny-bag filled with the little metal disks that have been used for the identification of the slain common soldiers.]

The Bearer

Here is a sack, a gunny sack,
A heavy sack I bring.
Here is toll of many a soul—
But not the soul of a king.

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This is the toll of common men,
Who lived in the common way;
Lived upon bread and wine and love,
In the light of the common day.

This is the toll of working men,
Blood and brawn and brain.
Who shall render us again
The worth of all the slain?

[*As The Counter speaks, The Bearer pours out the disks
on the table. The Bearer obeys The Counter.*]

The Counter

Pour them out on the table here.
Clickety—clickety—clack!
For every button a man went out,
And who shall call him back?
Clickety—clickety—clack!

One—two—three—four—
Every disk a soul!
Three score—four score—
So many boys went out to war.
Pick up that one that fell on the floor—
Didn't you see it roll?
That was a man a month ago.
This was a man. Row upon row—
Pile them in tens and count them so.

The Metal Checks

The Bearer

I have an empty sack.
It is not large. Would you have said
That I could carry on my back
So great an army—and all dead?

[*As The Counter speaks The Bearer lays the sack over his arm and helps count.*]

The Counter

Put a hundred in each tray—
We can tally them best that way.
Careful—do you understand
You have ten men in your hand?
There's another fallen—there—
Under that chair.

[*The Bearer finds it and restores it.*]

That was a man a month ago;
He could see and feel and know.
Then, into his throat there sped
A bit of lead.
Blood was salt in his mouth; he fell
And lay amid the battle wreck.
Nothing was left but this metal check—
And a wife and child, perhaps.

[*The Bearer finds the bag on his arm troublesome. He holds it up, inspecting it.*]

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The Bearer

What can one do with a thing like this?
Neither of life nor death it is!
For the dead serve not, though it served the dead.
The wounds it carried were wide and red,
Yet they stained it not. Can a man put food,
Potatoes or wheat, or even wood
That is kind and burns with a flame to warm
Living men who are comforted—
In a thing that has served so many dead?
There is no thrift in a graveyard dress,
It's been shroud for too many men.
I'll burn it and let the dead bless.

[He crosses himself and throws it into the fire. He watches it burn. The Counter continues to pile up the metal checks, and drop them by hundreds into the trays which he piles one upon another. The Bearer turns from the fire and speaks more slowly than he has before. He indicates the metal checks.]

Would not the blood of these make a great sea
For men to sail their ships on? It may be
No fish would swim in it, and the foul smell
Would make the sailors sick. Perhaps in Hell
There's some such lake for men who rush to war
Prating of glory, and upon the shore
Will stand the wives and children and old men
Bereft, to drive them back again

The Metal Checks

When they seek haven. Some such thing
I thought the while I bore it on my back
And heard the metal pieces clattering.

The Counter

Four score—five score—
These and as many more.
Forward—march!—into the tray!
No bugles blow today,
No captains lead the way;
But mothers and wives,
Fathers, sisters, little sons,
Count the cost
Of the lost;
And we count the unlived lives,
The forever unborn ones
Who might have been your sons.

The Bearer

Could not the hands of these rebuild
That which has been destroyed?
Oh, the poor hands! that once were strong and filled
With implements of labor whereby they
Served home and country through the peaceful day.
When those who made the war stand face to face
With these slain soldiers in that unknown place
Whither the dead go, what will be the word
By dead lips spoken and by dead ears heard?
Will souls say King or Kaiser? Will souls prate
Of earthly glory in that new estate?

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The Counter

One hundred thousand—
One hundred and fifty thousand—
Two hundred—

The Bearer

Can this check plough?
Can it sow? can it reap?
Can we arouse it?
Is it asleep?

Can it hear when a child cries?—
Comfort a wife?
This little metal disk
Stands for a life.

Can this check build,
Laying stone upon stone?
Once it was warm flesh
Folded on bone.

Sinew and muscle firm,
Look at it—can
This little metal check
Stand for a man?

The Counter

One—two—three—four—

Louise Driscoll

CHANT OF THE SHROUD MAKER

"We shall need also shrouds"

Others work for the living—
Be mine to work for the dead.
Afair there rages the battle loud;
With tender hands I fashion a shroud
For the clay when the soul has fled.

Soldier, stranger, friend,
Man I shall never see,
Loving, I weave a winding sheet
For one who has died for me.

Triply the sheet be folded
For the Blessed Trinity;
And on his bosom his folded hands
Unwanted now for life's demands,
And the scarlet cross shall be.

Soldier, brother, friend,
Face I shall never see,
Loving, I weave a winding sheet
For one who has died for me.

Cover the clay deserted
Now that the life has sped.

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Prayers, blessings and grateful tears
Follow his memory through the years:
Peace to the honored dead.

Soldier, brother, friend,
Man I shall never see;
Loving, I weave a winding sheet
For one who has died for me.

Marian Ramié

IF WAR IS RIGHT

If war is right, then God is might
And every prayer is vain:
Go raze your temples from the hills—
Red death is in the plain.

If war is right, then God is might,
And every prayer is vain:
Look not for Christ upon the hills—
He lies among the slain.

Parke Farley

THE HERO

Bomb and ball and shell
Had done their work so well
That, after many weeks,
The city fell—
(To save the women, so the burghers said.)

Then with red-dripping sword,
We, the enemy, poured
Down through the streets
To know what spoils the city might afford.
(What *are* the spoils of war?)

A corporal, nameless, with a little troop
Of nameless men, has stopped before a stoop
Whose door's ajar.
The corporal laughs. "Ha! Note the family group!"
(A man and wife, three daughters—and a dog.)

Ten of the soldiers enter. "Seize the goat.
No, no, don't shoot him—cut the villain's throat.
That's right, a little blood. Don't splutter so, you fool,
before the ladies.
What, not dead yet? You've bled a quart, you bloat!"
(A corporal must have his joke, you know.)

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"Well, let him die. There's tastier business now.
Here, you two nearest, strip me that old sow.
Too fat by far—but get those rags off, boys—
That's it. Now tie her up, so she can see the row."
(What *are* the spoils of war?)

"Now for the ninnies. Three to each, and quick!
Hell!—what a form! She'd make a queen look sick!
She's mine. You take the others,
And when you're through, a butt'll do the trick."
(A rifle butt is a handy thing, they say.)

An hour later.—"Stretch them in a row.

The old sow's fainted. Didn't like the show,
Perhaps. Fat—ugh! Better unburden her belly—
That's it—a twist of the sword. Well, bring the dog, and
off we go."
(A mascot's good to keep the spirits up.)

.

Again the howl of war;
Again the roar
Of cannon, and the rain
Of bombs from ships that soar.
(And we must win, for God is on our side!)

The Hero

The devilish enemy
Force onward, sullenly.
We are turned, driven, routed—
Drop everything, and flee.
(Why does not God uphold the right?)

But see! The flag is raised
And waved aloft! Amazed,
But ready to be led, we turn about.
'Tis the work of the very God we praised.
(Men can do worse than follow a flag.)

And there in the mighty din
We win,
And turn to see who bore the colors back.
We gather round and hem the hero in—
(A nameless corporal, now to be named forever.)

.

Mark where the hero stands,
A banner in his hands;
Banner of bronze in hands of bronze!
Bronze on granite forever he stands.
(Was he not chosen of God?)

John Russell McCarthy

THE BOMBARDMENT

Slowly, without force, the rain drops into the city. It stops a moment on the carved head of Saint John, then slides on again, slipping and trickling over his stone cloak. It splashes from the lead conduit of a gargoyle, and falls from it in turmoil on the stones in the Cathedral square. Where are the people, and why does the fretted steeple sweep about in the sky? Boom! The sound swings against the rain. Boom, again! After it, only water rushing in the gutters, and the turmoil from the spout of the gargoyle. Silence. Ripples and mutters. Boom!

The room is damp, but warm. Little flashes swarm about from the firelight. The lustres of the chandelier are bright, and clusters of rubies leap in the Bohemian glasses on the étagère. Her hands are restless, but the white masses of her hair are quite still. Boom! Will it never cease to torture, this iteration! Boom! The vibration shatters a glass on the étagère. It lies there formless and glowing, with all its crimson gleams shot out of pattern, spilled, flowing red, blood-red. A thin bell-note pricks through the silence. A door creaks. The old lady speaks: "Victor, clear away that broken glass." "Alas! Madame, the Bohemian glass!" "Yes, Victor, one hundred years ago my father brought it—" Boom! The room shakes, the servitor quakes. Another goblet shivers and breaks. Boom!

It rustles at the window-pane,—the smooth, streaming rain, and he is shut within its clash and murmur. Inside is his candle, his table, his ink, his pen, and his dreams. He is thinking, and the walls are pierced with beams of sunshine, slipping through young green. A fountain tosses itself up at the blue sky, and through the spattered water in the basin he can see copper carp, lazily floating among cold leaves. A wind-harp in a cedar-tree grieves and whispers, and words blow into his brain, bubbled, iridescent, shooting up like flowers of fire, higher and higher. Boom! The flame-flowers snap on their slender stems. The fountain rears up in long broken spears of disheveled water and flattens into the earth. Boom! And there is only the room, the table, the candle, and the sliding rain. Again, Boom!—Boom!—Boom!—He stuffs his fingers into his ears. He sees corpses, and cries out in fright. Boom! It is night, and they are shelling the city! Boom! Boom!

A child wakes and is afraid, and weeps in the darkness. What has made the bed shake? "Mother, where are you? I am awake." "Hush, my Darling, I am here." "But, Mother, something so queer happened, the room shook." Boom! "Oh! What is it? What is the matter?" Boom! "Where is father? I am so afraid." Boom! The child sobs and shrieks. The house trembles and creaks. Boom!

Retorts, globes, tubes, and phials lie shattered. All his trials oozing across the floor. The life that was his choosing,

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lonely, urgent, goaded by a hope, all gone. A weary man in a ruined laboratory, that was his story. Boom! Gloom and ignorance, and the jig of drunken brutes. Diseases like snakes crawling over the earth, leaving trails of slime. Wails from people burying their dead. Through the window he can see the rocking steeple. A ball of fire falls on the lead of the roof, and the sky tears apart on a spike of flame. Up the spire, behind the lacings of stone, zig-zagging in and out of the carved tracings, squirms the fire. It spouts like yellow wheat from the gargoyles, coils round the head of Saint John, and aureoles him in light. It leaps into the night and hisses against the rain. The Cathedral is a burning stain on the white, wet night.

Boom! The Cathedral is a torch, and the houses next to it begin to scorch. Boom! The Bohemian glass on the étagère is no longer there. Boom! A stalk of flame sways against the red damask curtains. The old lady cannot walk. She watches the creeping stalk and counts. Boom!—Boom! —Boom!

The poet rushes into the street, and the rain wraps him in a sheet of silver. But it is threaded with gold and powdered with scarlet beads. The city burns. Quivering, spearing, thrusting, lapping, streaming, run the flames. Over roofs, and walls, and shops, and stalls. Smearing its gold on the sky, the fire dances, lances itself through the doors, and lisps and chuckles along the floors.

The Bombardment

The child wakes again and screams at the yellow-petaled flower flickering at the window. The little red lips of flame creep along the ceiling beams.

The old man sits among his broken experiments and looks at the burning Cathedral. Now the streets are swarming with people. They seek shelter, and crowd into the cellars. They shout and call, and over all, slowly and without force, the rain drops into the city. Boom! And the steeple crashes down among the people. Boom! Boom, again! The water rushes along the gutters. The fire roars and mutters. Boom!

Amy Lowell.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

AMONG THE RED GUNS

*After waking at dawn one morning when the wind sang low
among dry leaves in an elm*

Among the red guns,
In the hearts of soldiers
Running free blood
In the long, long campaign:
Dreams go on.

Among the leather saddles,
In the heads of soldiers
Heavy in the wracks and kills
Of all straight fighting:
Dreams go on.

Among the hot muzzles,
In the hands of soldiers
Brought from flesh-folds of women—
Soft amid the blood and crying—
In all your hearts and heads
Among the guns and saddles and muzzles:

Dreams,
Dreams go on,
Out of the dead on their backs,
Broken and no use any more:
Dreams of the way and the end go on.

Carl Sandburg

THE CAMP FOLLOWER

We spoke, the camp-follower and I.
About us was a cold, pungent odor—
Gun-powder, stale wine, wet earth, and the smell of thou-
sands of men.
She said it reminded her of the scent
In the house of prostitutes she had lived in.
About us were soldiers—hordes of scarlet women, stupidly,
smilingly giving up their bodies
To a putrid-lipped, chuckling lover—Death;
While their mistresses in tinsel whipped them on. . . .
She spoke of a woman she had known in Odessa,
Owner of a huge band of girls,
Who had pocketed their earnings for years,
Only to be used, swindled and killed by some noble-
man. . . .
She said she thought of this grinning woman
Whenever she saw an officer brought back from battle,
dead. . . .
And I sat beside her and wondered.

Maxwell Bodenheim

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THE JEWISH CONSCRIPT

*There are nearly a quarter of a million Jews in
the Czar's army alone.*

Newspaper clipping

They have dressed me up in a soldier's dress,
With a rifle in my hand,
And have sent me bravely forth to shoot
My own in a foreign land.

Oh, many shall die for their fields and homes,
And many in conquest wild,
But I shall die for the fatherland
That murdered my little child.

How many hundreds of years ago—
The nations wax and cease!—
Did the God of our fathers doom us to bear
The flaming message of peace!

We are the mock and the sport of time!
Yet why should I complain!—
For a Jew that they hung on the bloody cross,
He also died in vain.

Florence Kiper Frank.

WHENCE COMES THE STRANGER

Whence comes this stranger
That with hoarse, lifted throat
Threatens the fields?

Night's darkness
And the darkness of mystery
Cover him as in a tent
Of two hides.

At twilight
I looked through the windows of my body,
And, lo!
The sheaves scattered,
And the rooted trees upturn.

His feet are flails of iron:
What he has threshed
Only the birds of the air will gather.
Bedstraw and branch
Will lie, and rot,
And dig unseen graves.

The wind blows where it wills:
(The Gift of Heaven wrote it in Patmos).
I hear the sound thereof,

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But cannot tell whence it comes,
Or whither it will go.

War rides, without thought,
On a pale horse
Through quiet places.
His banners are smoking torches;
His trumpets blow horribly.

He reaps a red harvest,
But not with the crooks of sickles.
The swaths fall slowly,
And the wings of vultures shadow them.

Love is a lamb, for weakness;
Kin a dove, for sorrow;
Peace the silence of a song.

He thunders,
And the suckling's cry
Is not heard:
He casts his lightning,
And flame breaks from the roofbeam:
He shakes the earth,
And the stones of the altar
Are dust.

Whence Comes the Stranger

At dawn
I looked through the windows of my spirit,
And, lo!
A sower had passed,
Sowing.

For my thoughts
Are not your thoughts,
Neither are your ways
My ways,
Saith the Lord.

Joseph Campbell

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PHASES

I.

There's a little square in Paris,
Waiting until we pass.
They sit idly there,
They sip the glass.

There's a cab-horse at the corner,
There's rain. The season grieves.
It was silver once,
And green with leaves.

There's a parrot in a window,
Will see us on parade,
Hear the loud drums roll—
And serenade.

II.

This was the salty taste of glory,
That it was not
Like Agamemnon's story.
Only, an eyeball in the mud,
And Hopkins,
Flat and pale and gory!

III.

But the bugles, in the night,
Were wings that bore
To where our comfort was;

Arabesques of candle beams,
Winding
Through our heavy dreams;

Winds that blew
Where the bending iris grew;

Birds of intermitted bliss,
Singing in the night's abyss;

Vines with yellow fruit,
That fell
Along the walls
That bordered Hell.

IV.

Death's nobility again
Beautified the simplest men.
Fallen Winkle felt the pride
Of Agamemnon
When he died.

What could London's
Work and waste
Give him—
To that salty, sacrificial taste?

What could London's
Sorrow bring—
To that short, triumphant sting?

Wallace Stevens

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FALLEN

He was wounded and he fell in the midst of hoarse shouting.
The tide passed, and the waves came and whispered about
his ankles.

Far off he heard a cock crow—children laughing,
Rising at dawn to greet the storm of petals
Shaken from apple-boughs; he heard them cry,
And turned again to find the breast of her,
And sank confused with a little sigh. . . .
Thereafter water running, and a voice
That seemed to stir and flutter through the trenches
And set dead lips to talking. . . .

Wreckage was mingled with the storm of petals. . . .

He felt her near him, and the weight dropped off—
Suddenly. . . .

Alice Corbin

THE WAKENED GOD

The War-god wakened drowsily;
 There were gold chains about his hands.
 He said: "And who shall reap my lands
And bear the tithes to Death for me?

"The nations stilled my thunderings;
 They wearied of my steel despair,
 The flames from out my burning hair:
Is there an ending of such things?"

Low laughed the Earth, and answered: "When
 Was any changeless law I gave
 Changed by my sons intent to save,
By puny pitying hands of men?

"I feel no ruth for some I bear. . . .
 The swarming, hungering overflow
 Of crowded millions, doomed to go,
They must destroy who chained you there.

"For some bright stone or shining praise
 They stint a million bodies' breath,
 And sell the women, shamed, to death,
And send the men brief length of days.

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"They kill the bodies swift for me,
And kill the souls you gave to peace. . . .
You were more merciful than these,
Old master of my cruelty.

"Lo, souls are scarred and virtues dim:
Take back thy scourge of ministry,
Rise from thy silence suddenly,
Lest these still take Death's toll to him!"

The War-God snapped his golden chain:
His mercies thundered down the world,
And lashing battle-lines uncurled
And scourged the crouching lands again.

Margaret Widdemer

UNSER GOTT

They held a great prayer-service in Berlin,
And augured German triumph from some words
Said to be spoken by the Jewish God
To Gideon, which signified that He
Was staunchly partial to the Israelites.
The aisles were thronged; and in the royal box
(I had it from a tourist who was there,
Clutching her passport, anxious, like the rest,)
There sat the Kaiser, looking "very sad."
And then they sang; she said it shook the heart.
The women sobbed; tears salted bearded lips
Unheeded; and my friend looked back and saw
A young girl crumple in her mother's arms.
They carried out a score of them, she said,
While German hearts, through bursting German throats
Poured out, *Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott!*

(Yea, "Unser Gott! Our strength is *Unser Gott!*
Not that light-minded Bon Dieu of France!")

I think we all have made our God too small.
There was a young man, a good while ago
Who taught that doctrine . . . but they murdered him
Because he wished to share the Jewish God
With other folk.

They are long-lived, these fierce
Old hating Gods of nations; but at last

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There surely will be spilled enough of blood
To drown them all! The deeps of sea and air,
Of old the seat of gods, no more are safe,
For mines and monoplanes. The Germans, now,
Can surely find and rout the God of France
With Zeppelins, or some slim mother's son
Of Paris, or of Tours, or Brittany,
Can drop a bomb into the *Feste Burg*,
And, having crushed the source of German strength,
Die happy in his blazing monoplane.

Sad jesting! If there be no God at all,
Save in the heart of man, why, even so—
Yea, all the more,—since we must make our God,
Oh, let us make Him large enough for all,
Or cease to prate of Him! If kings must fight,
Let them fight for their glory, openly,
And plain men for their lands and for their homes,
And heady youths, who go to see the fun,
Blaspheme not God. True, maybe we might leave
The God of Germany to some poor frau
Who cannot go, who can but wait and mourn,
Except that she will teach Him to her sons—
A God quite scornful of the Slavic soul,
And much concerned to keep Alsace-Lorraine.
They should go godless, too—the poor, benumbed,
Crushed, anguished women, till their hearts can hold
A greater Comforter!

(Yet it is hard
To make Him big enough! For me, I like
The English and the Germans and the French,
The Russians, too; and Servians, I should think,
Might well be very interesting to God.
But, do the best I may, my God is white,
And hardly takes a nigger seriously
This side of Africa. Not those, at least
Who steal my wood, and of a summer night
Keep me awake with shouting, where they sit
With monkey-like fidelity and glee
Grinding through their well-oiled sausage-mill—
The dead machinery of the white man's church—
Raw jungle-fervor, mixed with scraps sucked dry
Of Israel's old sublimities: not those.
And when they threaten us, the Higher Race,
Think you, which side is God's? Oh, let us pray
Lest blood yet spurt to wash that black skin white,
As now it flows because a German hates
A Cossack, and an Austrian a Serb!)

What was it that he said so long ago,
The young man who outgrew the Jewish God—
"Not a sparrow falleth—?" Ah, God, God,
And there shall fall a million murdered men!

Karle Wilson Baker

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WAR YAWP

America!

England's cheeky kid brother,

Who bloodily assaulted your august elder

At Bunker Hill and similar places

(Not mentioned in our history books),

What can I tell you of war or of peace?

Say, have you forgotten 1861?

Bull Run, Gettysburg, Fredericksburg?

Your million dead?

Tell me,

Was that the greatest time of your lives

Or the most disastrous?

Who knows? Not you; not I.

Who can tell the end of this war?

And say, brother Jonathan,

D'you know what it's all about?

Let me whisper you a secret—we don't!

We were all too fat with peace,

Or perhaps we didn't quite know how good peace was,

And so here we are,

And we're going to win. . . .

It's fine to be a soldier,

To get accepted by the recruiting sergeant,

Be trained, fitted with a uniform and a gun,

War Yawp

Say good-bye to your girl,
And go off to the front
Whistling, "It's a long way to Tipperary."
It's good to march forty miles a day,
Carrying ninety-one pounds on your back,
To eat good coarse food, get blistered, tired out, wounded,
Thirst, starve, fight like a devil
(i. e., like you an' me, Jonathan),
With the Maxims zip-zipping
And the shrapnel squealing,
And the howitzers rumbling like the traffic in Piccadilly.

Civilization?—

Jonathan, if you could hear them
Whistling the *Marseillaise* or *Marching Through Georgia*,
You'd want to go too.
Twenty thousand a day, Jonathan!
Perhaps you're more civilized just now than we are,
Perhaps we've only forgotten civilization for a moment,
Perhaps we're really fighting for peace.
And after all it will be more fun afterwards—
More fun for the poets and the painters—
When the cheering's all over
And the dead men buried
And the rest gone back to their jobs.
It'll be more fun for them to make their patterns,
Their word-patterns and color-patterns.

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And after all, there is always war and always peace,
Always the war of the crowds,
Always the great peace of the arts.

Even now,
With the war beating in great waves overhead,
Beating and roaring like great winds and mighty waters,
The sea-gods still pattern the red seaweed fronds,
Still chip the amber into neck-chains
For Leucothea and Thetis.

Even now,
When the *Marseillaise* screams like a hurt woman,
And Paris—grisette among cities—trembles with fear,
The poets still make their music
Which nobody listens to,
Which hardly anyone ever listened to.

The great crowds go by,
Fighting over each other's bodies in peace-time,
Fighting over each other's bodies in war-time.
Something of the strife comes to them
In their little, high rock-citadel of art,
Where they hammer their dreams in gold and copper,
Where they cut them in pine-wood, in Parian stone, in wax,
Where they sing them in sweet bizarre words
To the sound of antiquated shrill instruments;
And they are happy.

War Yawp

The little rock-citadel of the artists
Is always besieged;
There, though they have beauty and silence,
They have always tears and hunger and despair.
But that little citadel has held out
Against all the wars of the world—
Like England, brother Jonathan.
It will not fall during the great war.

There is always war and always peace;
Always the war of the crowds,
Always the great peace of the arts.

Richard Aldington

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

POETRY AND WAR



IN the seventeenth century the poet Milton set himself "to justify the ways of God to man."

God was held accountable to man for his actions, it seems, and the fact that there was an open breach between divine and human ideals of responsibility is obviously indicated in the need for justification. Or were not the shortcomings of man, his essential weakness in conduct and understanding, glozed over by fixing the responsibility for this weakness upon the divine author of creation?

Today, in the supreme crisis of the twentieth century, it would seem that the heavy task imposed upon the poets is to justify the ways of man—or nations—to God.

Is it any wonder that the poets have failed?

We can hardly expect Mr. Hardy, Mr. Kipling, Mr. Bridges, or Mr. Masfield to succeed where modern diplomacy has failed; but the failure of the poets, unlike that of the diplomats and kings, is due to a lack of conviction. Actually the poets have progressed beyond the stage of that confident national self-assertion which the particular crisis calls upon them to celebrate. If their poems are not faint-hearted, they are at least interchangeable, and would apply equally well to any country engaged in the struggle.

Clearly what we instinctively demand of the poet today is not a justification of the ways of man to God, but a justification of the ways of man to man.

If the patriotic poems of Mr. Kipling, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Bridges, or Mr. Masefield seem to us inadequate, it is because these poets have in reality outstripped the stage of martial enthusiasm and partisan spirit; it is because these poets feel, even if they do not realize the fact themselves, that it is impossible to justify the ways of man—or of any country—to God in the present conflict. Varying degrees of right and wrong, included in a greater wrong, can count for little with disillusioned minds. War has actually lost its illusion and its glamour. Some shreds of illusion may cling to the individual experience; the elemental sense of tragedy may lift the unforgiveable facts to the height of emotional eloquence, but of what worth is this eloquence beside the collective naked waste?

The American feeling about the war is a genuine revolt against war, and we have believed that POETRY might help to serve the cause of peace by encouraging the expression of this spirit of protest.

Just as the neutrality of the United States is in no sense passive, so the spirit of her poets is one of active antagonism to the barbaric survival of war.

English poets are not in a position just now to celebrate the spirit of democracy, as against that of empire. Yet is not this democratic sympathy the cause of the subtle undercurrent of regret we detect in their poems? Mr. J. A. Cramb, in *Germany and England*, says: "England is a nation schooled in empire from the past, the power which once belonged to the few passing more and more

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into the ranks of the English race itself, so that you have for the first time in history at once a nation and a democracy that is imperial." If the English poets seem to us to lack conviction, it may be because at heart they are better democrats than imperialists.

There is very little of the taint of military imperialism in the 738 poems received in this contest. Instead there is a general disposition to substitute for the retrogressive military ideals of a Bernhardt, a Treitschke, or a Cramb, the divine common sense of Abraham Lincoln. No future historian of the United States will be able to use quotations from her twentieth-century poets in support of an imperial policy of conquest and slaughter.

The American poet may fail, indeed he does not even attempt, to justify the ways of man to God; but he does not fail to realize that it is only through the justification of the ways of man to man that the ways of man may be ultimately justified to God.

A. C. H.

REVIEWS

The Sea is Kind, by T. Sturge Moore. Houghton-Mifflin Company.

Mr. T. Sturge Moore has the magic wand, and all he touches turns to gold, or at least to a shimmering silver. Rich lingering syllables, slow phrases full of sound, long recitative clauses with unexpected little turns of melody—these fill his book to the brim with music as rich and delicate as a Debussy pastoral. Like Debussy's, also, it is a new note, a

modern development, though it is easy enough to trace the poet's ancestry, direct or collateral, through his friend Mr. Yeats, and those remoter friends, Arnold, Keats, Crashaw perhaps, back to the singing Elizabethans, especially Spenser, and the romance poets they hearkened to.

In the lyric dialogue which gives its name to the volume, the nightingale says to Eucritos in a pause of song:

There is a sorcery in well-loved words;
But unintelligible music still
Probes to the buried Titan in the heart,
Whose strength, the vastness of forgotten life,
Suffers but is not dead.

So, in Mr. Moore's poetry, one listens to the word-sorcerer's music with but slighter care for what he is saying. The music itself is full of profound emotion; it expresses spiritual stature and majesty, and keeps the soul alive with longing. Yet, if the mind takes thought, it finds deep meanings clad in proud new raiment; it goes seeking for truth, for the high nameless love beyond love, with a poet who finds these infinite ideas infinitely dear, and who cares comparatively little for lesser loves and sorrows, the staple of most lives. *The Dying Swan* illustrates this loftiness of mood, which one may follow with more detail in many longer poems:

O silver-throated Swan
Struck, struck! a golden dart
Clean through thy breast has gone
Home to thy heart.
Thrill, thrill, O silver throat!
O silver trumpet, pour

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Love for defiance back
On him who smote!
And brim, brim o'er
With love; and ruby-dye thy track,
Down thy last living reach
Of river, sail the golden light—
Enter the sun's heart—even teach,
O wondrous-gifted Pain, teach thou
The God of love, let him learn how!

Lesser subjects are transfigured by this light. Some of the poems for children are as honestly child-like as Stevenson's but they deal more with the spirit of rapture in childhood, even when the subject is as ordinary as *Shoes and Stockings Off* or *Beautiful Meals*:

How nice it is to eat!
All creatures love it so
That they who first did spread,
Ere breaking bread,
A cloth like level snow
Were right, I know.

In *David and Goliath* it is the poet, rather than the child, who half sighs:

It is always good to be
Where long-sighed-for things
Are done with that felicity
Every hero with him brings.

Mr. Moore's poetry is "done with felicity"; in it is the rapture which a true musician strikes out of a noble instrument, and every *opus* is in his own authentic style, although the quality varies. There are delicate surprises in his rhythms, even when he uses a form as sharply defined as the sonnet; but he is more happy in freer rhymed forms.

H. M.

The Sister of the Wind, by Grace Fallow Norton. Houghton-Mifflin Co.

If it were not for her former book, *Little Gray Songs from St. Joseph's*, this little volume might be dismissed with a few words of praise for occasional charming lines, and the immature character of many of the verses passed over without remark. But Miss Norton, by her former book, has earned the right to be taken as a serious poet, and regarding her in that light, much of this collection is disappointing. It would seem to be made up largely of youthful poems, written before the period of *Little Gray Songs*, and it is always a pity, after an assured success, to let early work see the light of day. The reader has a right to expect a surer technique, a more ripened habit of mind, than early work can give.

Miss Norton always writes in a kind of strange, unearthly glamour; hers is a dream imagery, her scenic effects are those of a vision. This is not a modern method, and Miss Norton is practically the only writer today who employs it, and to be alone in a field is always a distinction. It is a pity, therefore, that the poems in this volume suffer so frequently from irritating mannerisms. For instance, repetition:

Far, far, far—
Wild love, bear me far!

I was a flame, I was a flame
That danced too hotly bright.

It is also annoying to have to pronounce *horizon* on the first syllable for the sake of the metre, as in the lines:

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O Sower of the Seed,
I have no horizon
Save where dream-rush and reed
Were o'er this memory won.

or *forest* on the last, in the poem of *Lawrence Hope*. And to speak of hands which *have shook* for the sake of the rhyme, in the same poem, is unpardonable.

But in spite of these faults, due, I am sure, to the verses being youthful attempts, there are some beautiful poems in the book. First of all, I think, *Allegra Agonistes*, but also *A Lament of Yasmini*, *Fear-bred* and *A Letter to a Friend*. There are some verbal felicities too, to make up for the infelicities:

Thy pretty crescent island, leaf-gay by day I see,
is an attractive internal rhyme, and in *Malarude* to speak of a wave as

All purpled, fringed and Tyrian-tinged
gives a shiver of pleasure.

The Sister of the Wind, from which the volume takes its name, is the most considerable poem in the book, and would seem to be of later production than most of the others. The divisions of it which are, to my mind, the most successful are VII, X and XIII. *A. L.*

Songs for the New Age, by James Oppenheim. The Century Co.

Songs for the new age these latest poems of Mr. Oppenheim's are in truth as well as in name; an expression, always adequate and at times beautiful, of the ideals of many of

the younger men today. But with the advantages of this type of verse they share the disadvantages. Their value as art is for today only. They are topically, not technically, interesting. The impression left on the mind is not, as with the older poets, that here is a lover of the beautiful, but that here is a lover of life as it is lived today. It seems almost adventitious that they should be in verse form at all, even so loose a form as "polyrhythmics."

Mr. Oppenheim has definitely abandoned the rhymed verse forms of his earlier work for this more elastic medium, which, in spite of its new name, was old when Whitman used it. But fortunately he has not entirely laid aside the sense of artistic restraint which the technic of these earlier forms gave him.

Rhythmically the poems in this volume are not equally successful. Naturally enough, perhaps, the more fundamental and primitive emotions, like love and the sheer physical joy of living, seem to create in Mr. Oppenheim more simple and beautiful rhythmical expressions than his more intellectual concepts. There is some splendid love poetry here, honest open-air love poetry, from which the "lilies and languors of virtue" are as lacking as the "roses and raptures of vice." Something of the spirit, and of the rhythm, of the old Hebrew poets is in it.

As representing three different facets of the same spiritual attitude—*Sin*, *Beloved*, and *One Flesh* are especially noteworthy. Here is a short poem, *The Runner in the Skies*, which will give a little of the book's flavor.

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Who is the runner in the skies,
With her blowing scarf of stars,
And our earth and sun hovering like bees about her blossoming
heart?

Her feet are on the winds, where space is deep,
Her eyes are nebulous and veiled,
She hurries through the night to a far lover.

E. T.

Beyond the Stars and Other Poems, by Charles Hanson
Towne. Mitchell Kennerley.

One is soothed, not startled, by this small book of quiet poems. Many of them are obvious enough, perhaps too obvious, in idea and metrical arrangement, and none of them ventures far into new fields. Yet there is a soft slow music in their cadences, and in the feeling of certain ones is a gentle dignity and beauty.

These qualities are most evident in the title-piece of the volume, which was one of POETRY'S earliest publications in a number now far too rare. They appear also in certain of the shorter poems. *A Ballad* contains this quatrain:

It was her eyes that held me most—
I never dreamed such eyes could be;
Tired as the dust of ancient queens
Or ruined cities by the sea.

And the first four couplets of *How Softly Runs the Afternoon* pile up whites upon whites in softly musical syllables:

How softly runs the afternoon
Beneath the billowy cloudy of June!
How brightly every moment slips,
How lightly sail the great cloud ships!
How slowly all the galleons go
Within that airy sea of snow—

Their white sails set, vast argosies
Bound for mysterious Hebrides!

H. M.

The Falconer of God, and Other Poems, by William Rose Benét. Yale University Press.

The real magic of Mr. Benét's *Merchants from Cathay* and his *Baron Munchausen*, the strange if deliberate magic of Arabia and Ind, of ivory and spices and jewelled turbans, is somehow lacking in this newest volume. It should be there—the recipe is much the same—but the mystery is flown. Only in spots does it gleam fitfully. The title poem, for instance, which appeared recently in *POETRY*, has some truly magical lines:

I flung my soul to the air like a falcon flying.
I said, "Wait on, wait on, while I ride below!
I shall start a heron soon
In the marsh beneath the moon—
A strange white heron rising with silver on its wings"

But for the most part Mr. Benét spoils his effects by over-much striving. His technic is too conscious, his rhyme and rhythm schemes too elaborate and involved to produce unity of effect. His words trip the mind constantly. Take these lines for instance:

Like miraculous shining electrum
This wide amber light.
As a lyre that is plucked by a plectrum
The wind in the firs on the height.

There are, however, besides the title poem, several deserving of mention. *The Foreign Sailor*, *Café Tortoni* ('81), and, in another style, *Poor Girl*, are distinctly interesting.

E. T.

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The Shadow of Aetna, by Louis V. Ledoux. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

One may well decry the use of general terms to define or pigeon-hole authors, but the term classicist as applied to Mr. Ledoux is not general but precise. His work has that quality of security which is gained through an appreciative sense of balance and repose. It has not the violent gesture of romantic or realistic awakening—a painful mood is not necessarily an unpleasant one. From this it may be inferred, that the word classicist is not here used, as it is so often used today, as a term of reproach. Occasionally one feels, however, that Mr. Ledoux's poems are a little remote from life. *Persephone*, *A Masque*, and *The Shadow of Aetna*, leave a less definite impression than the brief songs and lyrics in the book which record fleeting personal emotions.

A. C. H.

CHIEF JOSEPH ON WAR

Speaking of war poems, one of the finest we have read is this by the great Indian, Chief Joseph, which was quoted in a recent issue of the college magazine published by the Indian boys at Carlisle:

Hear me, my chiefs; my heart is sick and sad;
Our chiefs are killed,
The old men are all dead,
It is cold and we have no blankets;
The little children are freezing to death.
Hear me, my chiefs; my heart is sick and sad;
From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDS

The HELEN HAIRE LEVINSON Prize of two hundred dollars, offered by Mr. Salmon O. Levinson, of Chicago, for the best poem or group of poems by a citizen of the United States, published by POETRY during its second year, is awarded by the editorial staff of the magazine to

MR. CARL SANDBURG

of Chicago, for his group of *Chicago Poems*, published in the March number.

This prize will be continued for the magazine's third year by the generous donor.

The prize of one hundred dollars, offered in our September number by anonymous donors, for the best war or peace poem "based on the present European situation," is awarded to

MISS LOUISE DRISCOLL

of Catskill, New York, for her poem, *Metal Checks*, which opens the present number.

The committee regrets that it is unable to award prizes to two or three other poets. It would like especially to honor in this way the beautiful poem, *On Heaven*, contributed by Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer to the June number.

We urge with confidence the endowment of further prizes and scholarships by generous patrons of art. Prizes of a thousand, fifteen hundred, even two thousand dollars, and many travelling scholarships, are given annually to

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painters, sculptors and architects in this country, and these artists receive as well good prices for their works. Poets, on the contrary, receive no prizes except ours; no university or other institution, so far as we are aware, offers a scholarship for excellence in this art; and few poets could live on bread and water in a hermit's cell from the pitiful income they derive from verse. No artist has more need of cosmopolitan culture and experience than a poet; yet the extravagantly endowed American Academy at Rome, which gives bed, board, and a liberal income to other artists, does not recognize his existence.

Besides the prize-winners above mentioned, the committee desires to include in the honor list of the year—Oct. 1913-Sept. 1914—the following poems. Translations, and poems by two members of the committee (Miss Monroe and Mr. Pound) are withdrawn from competition.

On Heaven, by Ford Madox Hueffer (June).

The Santa Fé Trail, by Vachel Lindsay (July).

A Woman to Her Dead Husband, by D. H. Lawrence (January).

Dark Wings, by James Stephens (August).

Indian Summer, by William Ellery Leonard (October).

Songs of Deliverance, by Orrick Johns (February).

Consummation, by Witter Bynner (April).

The King, by Skipwith Cannell (September).

Lesbia, by Richard Aldington (January).

The Blue Symphony, by John Gould Fletcher (September).

Announcements of Awards

The Coal Picker, by Amy Lowell (August).

The Code—Heroics, by Robert Frost (February).

The Sharing, by Agnes Lee (December).

Our Lady of Idleness, by Florence Wilkinson Evans
(December).

The Steam Shovel, by Eunice Tietjens (September).

NEW BOOKS OF VERSE

Many interesting books of verse are announced for fall publication. Although it is not possible to give the full publishers' lists, the following books are selected as certain to engage the attention of all who are interested in contemporary poetry. Of course there are others by new writers whose quality is yet to be discovered. Reviews will appear in future issues of POETRY.

The Sea Is Kind, by T. Sturge Moore; *Poems*, by Clinton Scollard. Houghton-Mifflin Co.

Borderlands Through Thoroughfares, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson; *The Congo, and Other Poems*, by Vachel Lindsay; *Poems*, by James Stephens; *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, by Amy Lowell; *You and I*, by Harriet Monroe. Macmillan Co.

The Poems of Edward Sanford Martin; *The Grand Canyon, and Other Poems*, by Henry Van Dyke; *One Woman to Another, and Other Poems*, by Corinne Roosevelt Robinson; *The Pathflower, and Other*

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

- Poems*, by Olive T. Dargan. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Trees, and Other Poems, by Joyce Kilmer; *In Deep Places*,
by Amelia Josephine Burr. George H. Doran Co.
Open Water, by Arthur Stringer. John Lane Co.
Poems, by Brian Hooker. Yale University Press.
The Single Hound, by Emily Dickinson, with Introduction
by Martha Dickinson Bianchi. Little, Brown & Co.
Poems, by Harry Kemp. Mitchell Kennerley.
The Shoes of Happiness, by Edwin Markham. Doubleday,
Page & Co.
Songs for the New Age, by James Oppenheim. Century Co.
The Wild Knight, Early Poems, by G. K. Chesterton. E. P.
Dutton & Co.
Songs and Poems, by Martin Schütze. The Laurentian
Publishers.

NOTES

In response to POETRY's offer of a prize for the best war or peace poem, so many acceptable poems came in among the over seven hundred submitted, that it was decided at the last moment to devote this entire issue to them. The editors feel that subscribers, and the public in general, will be profoundly interested in this assemblage of widely varying ideas, and that the number will be recognized as a fine presentation of American feeling, and a little British as well, on the absorbing subject of the present war.

Each poem submitted was read and decided upon before

the envelope containing the poet's true name was opened.

Miss Louise Driscoll, of Catskill, New York, the prize-winner, has published no volume as yet, but has contributed to POETRY and other magazines.

Of the other contributors, Mr. Joseph Campbell, the Irish poet, and Mr. Richard Aldington, the young English imagist, need no introduction to readers of POETRY. Nor do Miss Amy Lowell of Boston, Miss Margaret Widdemer of Philadelphia, and the Chicago contingent, Mr. Carl Sandburg, Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim, Florence Kiper Frank (Mrs. Jerome K.), and Alice Corbin (Mrs. Wm. P. Henderson), who is assistant editor of the magazine. Miss Lowell's poem was not in competition for the prize.

Karle Wilson Baker (Mrs. T. E. Baker) of Nacogdoches, Texas, has contributed verse to the magazines under the name of Charlotte Wilson.

Miss Marian Ramié is a Red Cross nurse serving the wounded in England.

Mr. John Russell McCarthy and Mr. Wallace Stevens are unknown as yet to the editor. Parke Farley is a pseudonym.

BOOKS RECEIVED

The Theory of Poetry In England, by R. P. Cowl, M. A. Macmillan.

Mary Magdalene, and Other Poems, by Laura E. McCully. Macmillan.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

- The Falconer of God*, by William Rose Benet. Yale University Press.
- Earth Triumphant, and Other Tales in Verse*, by Conrad Aiken. Macmillan.
- The Congo, and Other Poems*, by Vachel Lindsay. Macmillan.
- Lichens from the Temple*, by Robert Restalrig Logan. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Lux Juventutis*, by Katharine A. Esdaile. Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Songs for the New Age*, by James Oppenheim. The Century Co.
- Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, by Amy Lowell. Macmillan.
- The Little King*, by Witter Bynner. Mitchell Kennerley.
- The Gypsy Trail, an Anthology for Campers*, Compiled by Mary D. Hopkins and Pauline Goldmark. Kennerley.
- America and Other Poems*, by W. J. Dawson. John Lane Company.
- Open Water*, by Arthur Stringer. John Lane Company.
- Poems*, by Katharine Howard. Sherman, French & Co.
- One Woman to Another and Other Verse*, by Corinne Roosevelt Robinson. Scribner.
- Pagan Poems*, by Franklin Henry Giddings. Macmillan.
- Philip the King and Other Poems*, by John Masefield. William Heineman, London.
- Borderlands and Thoroughfares*, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. Macmillan.
- The Great Grey King and Other Poems Old and New*, by Samuel Valentine Cole. Sherman, French & Co.
- Undine, A Poem*, by Antoinette de Coursey Patterson. H. W. Fisher & Co., Philadelphia.
- The King of the Dark Chamber*, by Rabindra Nath Tagore. Macmillan.
- Gitanjali*, by Rabindra Nath Tagore. Macmillan. (New Edition.)
- The Ebon Muse and Other Poems*, by Léon Laviaux. Englished by John Myers O'Hara. Smith & Sale. Portland, Me.
- Poems Obiter*, by R. E. L. Smith. The Gorham Press, Boston.
- Justification, A Philosophic Phantasy*, by John W. White. Richard G. Badger.

A NOTABLY AMERICAN BOOK

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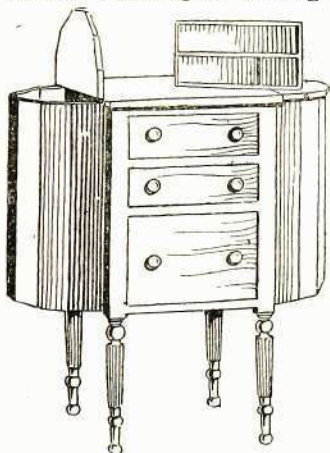
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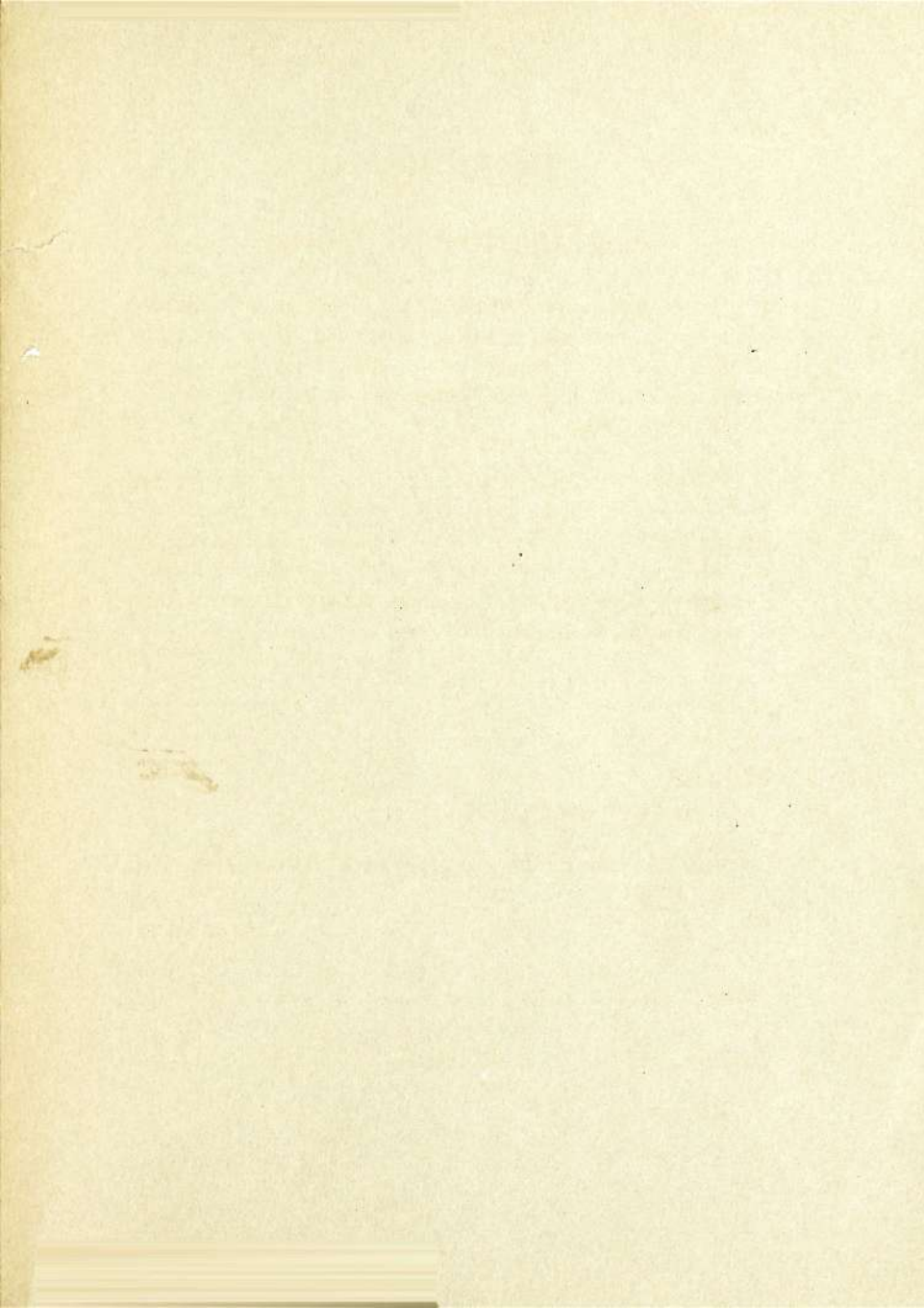
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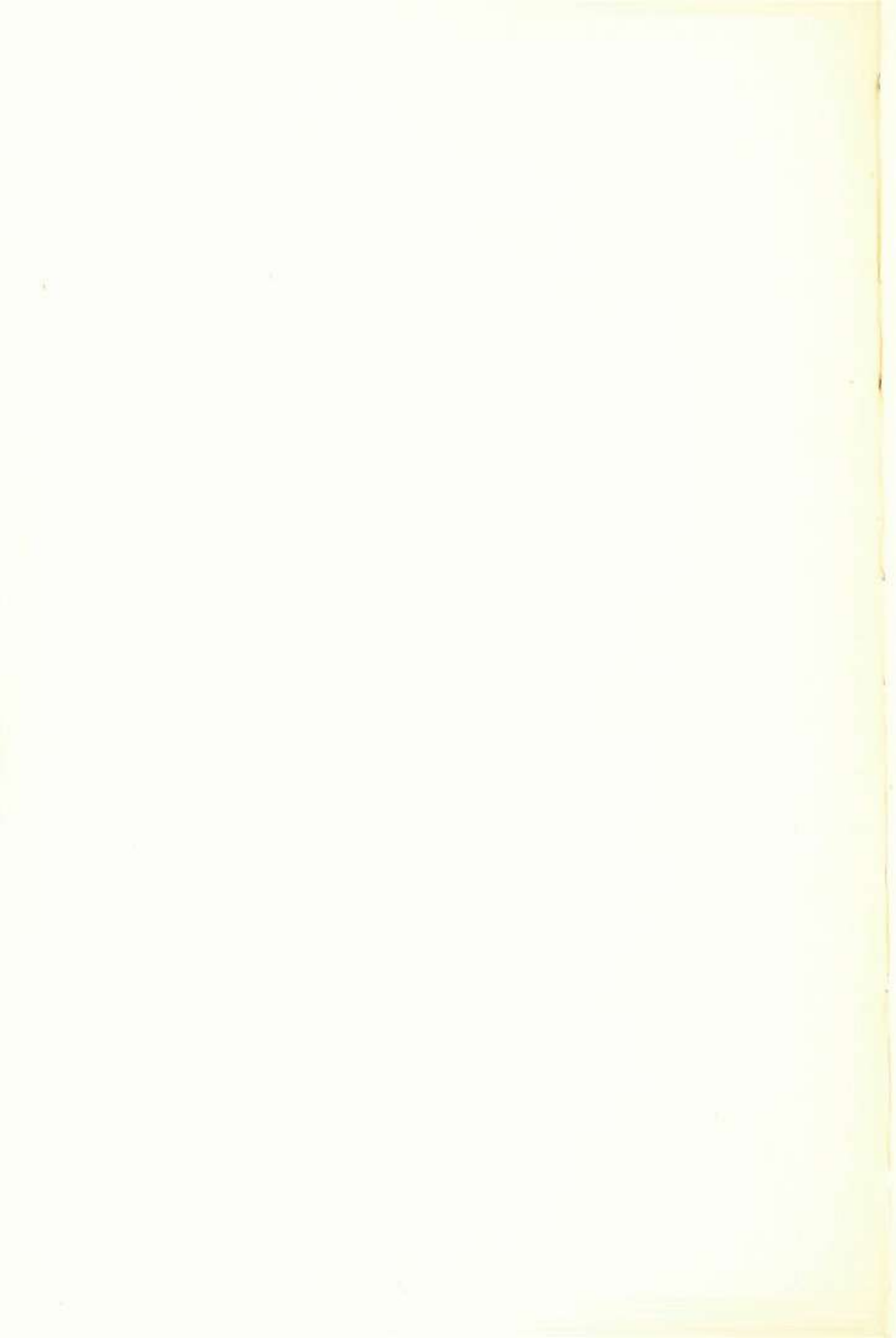
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DECEMBER, 1914

OLD SONGS FOR NEW

O WORLD



WORLD that changes under my hand,
O brown world, bitter and bright,
And full of hidden recesses
Of love and light—

O world, what use would there be to me
Of power beyond power
To change, or establish new balance,
To build, or deflower?

O world, what use would there be?
—Had I the Creator's fire,
I could not build you nearer
To my heart's desire!

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

HUMORESQUE

To some the fat gods
Give money,
To some love;

But the gods have given me
Money and love:

Not too much money,
Nor quite enough love!

To some the fat gods
Give money,
To some love.

TWO VOICES

There is a country full of wine
And liquor of the sun,
Where sap is running all the year,
And spring is never done,
Where all is good as it is fair,
And love and will are one.
Old age may never come there,
But ever in to-day
The people talk as in a dream
And laugh slow time away.

Two Voices

But would you stay as now you are,
Or as a year ago?
Oh, not as then, for then how small
The wisdom we did owe!
Or if forever as to-day,
How little we could know!

Then welcome age, and fear not sorrow;
To-day's no better than to-morrow,
Or yesterday that flies.
By the low light in your eyes,
By the love that in me lies,
I know we grow more lovely
Growing wise.

LOVE ME AT LAST

Love me at last, or if you will not,
 Leave me;
Hard words could never, as these half-words,
 Grieve me:
Love me at last—or leave me.
Love me at last, or let the last word uttered
 Be but your own;
Love me, or leave me—as a cloud, a vapor,
 Or a bird flown.
Love me at last—I am but sliding water
 Over a stone.

Alice Corbin.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

POEMS

GRIEF

The darkness steals the forms of all the queens.
But oh, the palms of her two black hands are red!
—It is Death I fear so much, it is not the dead—
Not this gray book, but the red and bloody scenes.

The lamps are white like snowdrops in the grass;
The town is like a churchyard, all so still
And gray, now night is here: nor will
Another torn red sunset come to pass.

And so I sit and turn the book of gray,
Feeling the shadows like a blind man reading,
All fearful lest I find some next word bleeding.
—Nay, take my painted missal book away.

MEMORIES

Oh, if I could have put you in my heart,
If but I could have wrapped you in myself,
How glad I should have been! And now the chart
Of your lost face unrolls itself to me—
Or dead, or still, or grieved, or glad, or hurt.

And oh, that you had never, never been
Some of your selves, my love; I would that some
Of your several faces I had never seen!
For still the night through will they come and go
One after each, and show me what they mean.

And oh, my love, as I rock for you tonight,
And have not any longer any hope
Of sweeping out old sorrows with the bright
Sure love that could have helped you through the fight,
I own that some of me is dead tonight.

WEARINESS

Why does the thin gray strand
Floating up from the forgotten
Cigarette between my fingers—
Why does it trouble me?

Ah, you will understand!
When I carried my mother downstairs,
A few times only, at the beginning
Of her soft-foot malady,

I should find for a reprimand
To my gayety, a long gray hair
On the breast of my coat, and I let it float,
Gray strand, towards the dark chimney.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

SERVICE OF ALL THE DEAD

Between the avenue of cypresses,
All in their scarlet capes and surplices
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,
The priests in gold and black, the villagers.

And all along the path to the cemetery
The round dark heads of men crowd silently;
And black-scarfed faces of women-folk wistfully
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands
With sunken head and forgotten, folded hands;
And at the foot of a grave a mother kneels
With pale shut face, nor neither hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers
Between the avenue of cypresses,
The silence of the many villagers,
The candle-flames beside the surplices.

DON JUAN

It is Isis the mystery
Must be in love with me.

Here this round ball of earth,
Where all the mountains sit
Solemn in groups,
And the bright rivers flit
Round them for girth:

Here the trees and troops
Darken the shining grass;
And many bright people pass
Like plunder from heaven:
Many bright people pass
Plundered from heaven.

But what of the mistresses,
What the beloved seven?
—They were but witnesses,
I was just driven.

Where is there peace for me?
It is Isis the mystery
Must be in love with me.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

SONG

Love has crept into her sealed heart
As a field bee, black and amber,
Breaks from the winter-cell, to clamber
Up the warm grass where the sunbeams start.

Love has crept into her summery eyes,
And a glint of colored sunshine brings
Such as his along the folded wings
Of the bee before he flies.

But I with my ruffling, impatient breath
Have loosened the wings of the wild young sprite;
He has opened them out in a reeling flight,
And down her words he hasteneth.

Love flies delighted in her voice:
The hum of his glittering, drunken wings
Sets quivering with music the little things
That she says, and her simple words rejoice.

D. H. Lawrence.

POEMS

MY SORROW

My sorrow that I am not by the little dun,
By the lake of the starlings at Rosses under the hill—
And the larks there, singing over the fields of dew,
Or evening there, and the sedges still!
For plain I see now the length of the yellow sand,
And Lissadell far off and its leafy ways,
And the holy mountain whose mighty heart
Gathers into it all the colored days.
My sorrow that I am not by the little dun,
By the lake of the starlings at evening when all is still—
And still in whispering sedges the herons stand.
'Tis there I would nestle at rest till the quivering moon
Uprose in the golden quiet over the hill.

SPLENDID AND TERRIBLE

Splendid and terrible your love,
The searing pinions of its flight
Flamed but a moment's space above
The place where ancient memories keep
Their quiet; and the dreaming deep
Moved inly with a troubled light,
And that old passion woke and stirred
Out of its sleep.

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Splendid and terrible your love.
I hold it to me like a flame;
I hold it like a flame above
The empty anguish of my breast.
There let it stay, there let it rest—
Deep in the heart whereto it came
Of old as some wind-wearied bird
Drops to its nest.

THE OTHERS

From our hidden places,
By a secret path,
We come in the moonlight
To the side of the green rath.

There the night through
We take our pleasure,
Dancing to such a measure
As earth never knew.

To dance and lilt
And song without a name,
So sweetly chanted
'Twould put a bird to shame.

The Others

And many a maiden
Is there, of mortal birth,
Her young eyes laden
With dreams of earth.

Music so piercing wild
And forest-sweet would bring
Silence on blackbirds singing
Their best in the ear of spring.

And many a youth entranced
Moves slow in the dreamy round,
His brave lost feet enchanted
With the rhythm of faery sound.

Oh, many a thrush and blackbird
Would fall to the dewy ground,
And pine away in silence
For envy of such a sound.

So the night through,
In our sad pleasure,
We dance to many a measure
That earth never knew.

Seumas O'Sullivan

CHRISTMAS AT SAINT LUKE'S HOSPITAL

Here in this house of mystery and death,
This challenge flung at God, who has set pain
And heart-ache and slow torture in his world,
Dawns Christmas Day.

We have outwatched the night.
Vainly, in tight-lipped silence, we have wrung
From creeping death a piteous hour or two.
Now it is day. The long white corridors,
Naked and empty in the winds of dawn,
Stir in the light, and grow alive again
With flitting nurses and internes in white,
Who talk and laugh together—as they must.

They wish us "Merry Christmas," and we try
To cover our soul's nakedness, and smile.
And as we wait, dumb with long agony,
A jingling of loud bells breaks the white calm
Absurdly. A man enters, dressed in red,
Tricked out in furs, white-bearded for the saint
Of rapturous childhood, and his deep eyes wear
A haunting, wistful mask of gaiety.
He laughs and capers, jingles bells and jokes
With mad abandon, speaks a word to us—
A frothy nothing; then, still jingling, goes,
And the white calm returns.

Christmas at Saint Luke's Hospital

A tiny flame

Set in the vastness of the night he is,
A thin small sound that impishly disturbs
The silence of the spheres, a childish joy
Futile and beautiful, the soul of man
That cries to heaven, "Bring on your thunderbolts—
I still defy!" . . .

He passes, and we wrap the human warmth
About our shivering souls, and turn us back
To face the darkness of another day.

Eunice Tietjens

CHARWOMEN

They might be the grim Parcae of old Greece,
The three worn women whom I oft behold
Pass my warm window in the biting cold
Across the square decent with falling fleece.
Sometimes, as now, when the arc-lights increase,
The wrinkled faces suddenly unfold
A revelation those taut lips withhold
From utterance. O Time, wilt thou ne'er cease
To chisel thus thy bitter, cruel sway
Upon the yielding masks of these thy slaves?
How better far they never saw the sun,
But in Pentelic womb all dreaming lay,
Safe from thy wasteful, groping hand that graves
A million souls to shape one Parthenon!

Philip Becker Goetz

I WALKED IN THE OPEN

I walked in the open, seeking God,
And came where men had builded them a church with
 windows of multi-colored glass to balk the sunlight.
And there had they fashioned them an altar of mysterious
 recesses and many steps, of gradations and curtained
 sanctities wherein dwelt silence and a sense of fear.
I looked upon a cross of beaten gold, and candles flaming
 dully through the dark,
And all the corners in the church were dim, and all the
 aisles mysterious with strange shadows.
A priest held high a crucifix, and my soul seemed listening
 to the voice of his soul:
"God is in there. We've shut Him up. He's back of that
 veil.
"See how the candles blink. It's God's breath makes them
 do that.
"Here's our creed. We've shut God up in that too—
"Say it over and over and you'll come to believe it.
"Then shall you save your soul alive;
"Then shall you creep on your knees into the marble chancel,
 and you may see a corner of the veil that covers the
 Sanctus Sanctissimus.
"The veil hides the face of God; it screens the awful majesty
 of the Most High.
"That's as near as you may hope to come to seeing God.

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"You would be stricken blind if you were to look upon Him.
"But He's in there. We've shut Him up."

And all the while God and I stood outside in His blessed
sunlight and laughed.

Francis Howard Williams

LYRICS

AFTER THE MARTYRDOM

They threw a stone, you threw a stone,
I threw a stone that day.
Although their sharpness bruised his flesh
He had no word to say.

But for the moan he did not make
To-day I make my moan;
And for the stone I threw at him
My heart must bear a stone.

LAMENT

Lady, your heart has turned to dust,
Your wail is taken by the sea.
The wind is knocking at my heart,
And will not let me be.

Your moaning smites me in my dreams,
And I must sorrow till I die.
And I shall rove, and I shall weep,
Till in the grave I lie.

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THE MAD WOMAN

Oh blame me not that his lips were red,
Or that my eyes on his eyes went blind,
A leaf am I in a ruthless wind—
I'll dig me a grave and rest me, dead.

Wolf-winds, a pack,
I dragged by the back
And loosened them at his door.
Asp of despair,
Crawl into his lair
And eat his heart to the core.

For the baby he gave to me
The moon fell into the sea.
The white leopards of foam
Said, "Carry it home!"
So I put it into a sack,
And carried it home on my back.

I lit the lantern of the sun,
And stole the blue cloth of the sky—
A cover for my little one.
I made his crib. Is that his cry?
Let me run, let me run,
My eyes grow sad for my son.

The Mad Woman

Spear of the world's scorn in my side,
The grave is deep where a maid may bide,
Ever and ever satisfied.

EARLY NIGHTFALL

The pale day drowns on the western steep;
The toiler faints along the marge of sleep.
Within the sunset-press, incarnadine,
The sun, a peasant, tramples out his wine.

Ah, scattered gold rests on the twilight streams;
The poppy opes her scarlet purse of dreams.
Night with the sickle-moon engarners wheat,
And binds the sheaves of stars beneath her feet.

Rest, weary heart, and every flight-worn bird!
The brooklet of the meadow lies unstirred.
Sleep, every soul, against a comrade breast!
God grant you peace, and guard you in your rest!

Scharmél Iris.

THE TREASURE DRAWER

Often in memory to a drawer I turn
Wherein my mother kept such queer, strange things,
For which with a child's fancy I would yearn:
An ivory fan, emerald and opal rings,
Attar of roses in a bottle tall
With tracteries of Arabesque design,
A pair of velvet slippers, dainty, small—
I doubted Cinderella's were so fine—
Made up the treasures: and a mother-o'-pearl
And lacquer box, tight locked, of which the key
Had long been lost—since she was quite a girl,
She said. Years passed, and then the mystery
Was solved: three little feathers, golden bright,
Lay side by side, labelled in childish hand
As "Piccadilly's Feathers." How my sight
Grew dim, for I at last could understand
The loneliness a pet canary filled.
Ah, I could wish at times those memories,
Like Piccadilly's songs, might all be stilled—
Or locked in some pearl casket from these eyes!

Antoinette De Coursey Patterson

LONDON NIGHT

In the Strand

Desperately and disdainfully showed his wares. . . .

Stupid things . . . laces, studs. . . .

I bought . . . his look . . . and . . . this verse.

Introduction

Still the void turns

And creaks,

And spatters me

With spume of gaunt fatuity. . .

And again turns

Unceasingly

Till the quiet burns.

The night is full, with laughter in its wings,

And faint wan faces ouched in yearning sky,

Laughter that weals the face of night

And stings. The anguished soul drifts by.

I will not go. . .

Still the void turns. . .

And sickening thuds. . .

Creaking.

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Still the quiet burns. . .
With flame that floods
The secret inner sky,
And yearns to the sound
And the laughter.

I am called,
Hesitant.
Still the void turns.

In the bus

Hum of the town!
Splashes of faces
In garish places
Drive ever down.

In the park

The gaunt trees grope to the night. . .
The distant magic. . .
They touch the sky.
The faces linger to the light,
And endlessly drift by,
With shuffle of far feet,
Like leaves that strike
And flicker on the way
With little ripples of dry sound.

London Night

The band

Noise of the band . . . and the wind asleep.
Over the wind I mount on wings,
And swing and gleam and sheer and float.

How chill it is grown . . . and how remote the faces. . .
And thin and very faint . . . and the wind sings. . .

Interlude

Shop girl, poor clerk—
Ephemerons . . . wing your swift way.
A little love . . . it will not mark
The soul unused to day.
So cold, so far away you seem,
Shop girl, poor clerk.

I am the dreamer. . . Are you the dream?

How the noise mocks me . . . and the pain!

And they laugh about me . . . while the trees un-
heard . . .

Though not to one or three . . .

The water calls in vain.

For she is much more amorous then,

And will not prize her sweets too dear. . .

For after all we are poor men

And love we may not know;

Though here. . .

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Hyde Park Corner

Stress of the crowd . . . and the whole of it mute. . .
Tunics that thrill in the light till you look at his face
With a rush of hate . . . and hate for the grace
Of the slavey wooing the brute.

Stress of the crowd!

Picture Palace

Breathless. . . The giggles cease. . .
The ruddled alcove. . .
The clicking of the reel . . . peace.
Flicker . . . light.
We thrill to the rush and the clatter. . .
And spatter the night with our souls. . .
And steal the soul of the night.

The girl at the box was very sweet. . .
Manicured nails, and massaged smile, and teeth
Resplendent . . . Flicker . . . light.
The rush and the clatter,
With dust of fatuity
Spattered
Out of the void.

Always the street and the giggle of girls,
Women from where?
God, but the night must be full of them. . .

London Night

Anarchist Club

Quiet at last . . . she here. . .
The babble of hot voices strangely soothes. . .
The coffee is black. . . Avernus' waters where
The soul's disquiets flare,
And she. . . Her face is like half-old ivory,
A something past in its whiteness,
With cheeks a-hollow. . . Smoking ever she talks
And disdains me . . . quite. . .
 This is not the place. . .
Later, perhaps, she'll not deny me.
And now and then some one will say,
"*A bas!*" . . . "*Saboter!*"

How came we here?

Café

The sybaritic waiter brings us drink. . .
Thick lips and mottled face. . .
And gazes at her.
I think his eyes swoon back
To ancient arcadies
In her black, secret eyes.
She is the beauty at the feast. . .
My friends and their friends flock,
With words well greased.
Oh! but the babble wearies me
And the lights. . .
And rococo. . .

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Liqueur

One lotus bud swings to the harbor of my soul
And bursts. . .
And each glad petal . . . thirsts
Unto all heaven. . . Far
Insinuating roots. . .
Wondrous fruits
Creating, becoming of all things,
And God singing!

"My moon, my almond-eyed delight goes from me
And I am old. . .
I am far older than she is. . .
And now she laughs at my gray hairs. . .
Yet may I not stretch out to chasten her lest she rebel.
I will use songs and fair words. . .
To bring her to me.
Then she shall languish forever
In the prison of my infinite mercy."

Night, speak me soft—
I have sipped but the rim of "her" cup. . .
Horror of vastness dripped
From star to star—
And even you
Could not help me.
I am afraid.

John Rodker

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

CHRISTMAS, 1914



THE tidal year brings us once more to the Christmas season, reminds us once more of the beauty of that ideal of human brotherhood which, for two thousand years, the blundering quarrelling world, absorbed in immediate needs and passions, has nevertheless not quite been able to forget. Again and again, through these twenty centuries, the star in the east has been obscured, the promise of peace on earth has been outraged, the blossoming fields have been strewn with dead, in the name of this or that flag or cause. But the ideal persists toward its ultimate fulfilment, which may perhaps be hastened by the coldness, the devilish ingenuity, the anachronistic autocracy, of modern war.

Illusion rules the world—we are still led by mediaeval dreamers—nay, by Caesar, Alexander, Sesostris. The feudal system, the world-old divine right of kings, may be making its last stand at the Marne and the Yser. The new illusions must have time to grow to full stature—the illusion of liberty, equality, fraternity, the impossibly glorious illusion of democracy—before they will have a giant's strength to lead men and compel nations. But the day of their power will surely come—may their discipline be more humane

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than that of the war-lords of the past, and not too soft to satisfy the human need of heroism.

Meantime, by way of compensation for its awful and immeasurable losses, the world must get what comfort it can out of heroic self-sacrifice, and the purging and cleansing effect of war. Blood washes cleaner than water; in its flood the subtle degeneracies, the rotten sores, of an over-ripe civilization, may be purified, obliterated. Already we hear a new statement of values—even we who are sea-walled from the tumult. And the sternness of it silences a thousand once-loud voices of comfort and despair.

There will be a new statement of values in the arts. Many little schools are like to disappear while painters, sculptors, poets, follow the danger-trails of beauty. The lithe muse is like to strip her followers bare of ornaments, luxuries, affectations; to summon them out of their halls and garrets for a stern heroic march into a wild new kingdom of untried and dangerous illusions—that kingdom of the future in which the race will be born again to its endless sorrow, its unconquerable joy, and its undying hope of peace on earth.

And so it may be with a deeper meaning than usual, a more heroic plunge of the spirit into veiled distances, that we wish each other this year Merry Christmas.

H. M.

MODERN GEORGICS

North of Boston, by Robert Frost. David Nutt, London.

It is a sinister thing that so American, I might even say so parochial, a talent as that of Robert Frost should have to be exported before it can find due encouragement and recognition.

Even Emerson had sufficient elasticity of mind to find something in the "yawp." One doesn't need to like a book or a poem or a picture in order to recognize artistic vigor. But the typical American editor of the last twenty years has resolutely shut his mind against serious American writing. I do not exaggerate, I quote exactly, when I say that these gentlemen deliberately write to authors that such and such a matter is "too unfamiliar to our readers."

There was once an American editor who would even print me, so I showed him Frost's *Death of the Hired Man*. He wouldn't have it; he had printed a weak pseudo-Masefieldian poem about a hired man two months before, one written in a stilted pseudo-literary language, with all sorts of floridities and worn-out ornaments.

Mr. Frost is an honest writer, writing from himself, from his own knowledge and emotion; not simply picking up the manner which magazines are accepting at the moment, and applying it to topics in vogue. He is quite consciously and definitely putting New England rural life into verse. He is not using themes that anybody could have cribbed out of Ovid.

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There are only two passions in art; there are only love and hate—with endless modifications. Frost has been honestly fond of the New England people, I dare say with spells of irritation. He has given their life honestly and seriously. He has never turned aside to make fun of it. He has taken their tragedy as tragedy, their stubbornness as stubbornness. I know more of farm life than I did before I had read his poems. That means I know more of "Life."

Mr. Frost has dared to write, and for the most part with success, in the natural speech of New England; in natural spoken speech, which is very different from the "natural" speech of the newspapers, and of many professors. His poetry is a bit slow, but you aren't held up every five minutes by the feeling that you are listening to a fool; so perhaps you read it just as easily and quickly as you might read the verse of some of the sillier and more "vivacious" writers.

A sane man knows that a prose short story can't be much better than the short stories of De Maupassant or of "Steve" Crane. Frost's work is interesting, incidentally, because there has been during the last few years an effort to proceed from the prose short story to the short story in verse. Francis Jammes has done a successful novel in verse, in a third of the space a prose novel would have taken—*Existences in La Triomphe de la Vie*. Vildrac and D. H. Lawrence have employed verse successfully for short stories. Masfield is not part of this movement. He has avoided all the difficulties of the immeasurably difficult art

of good prose by using a slap-dash, flabby verse which has been accepted in New Zealand. Jammes, Vildrac and Lawrence have lived up to the exigencies of prose and have gained by brevity. This counts with serious artists.

Very well, then, Mr. Frost holds up a mirror to nature, not an oleograph. It is natural and proper that I should have to come abroad to get printed, or that "H. D."—with her clear-cut derivations and her revivifications of Greece—should have to come abroad; or that Fletcher—with his *tic* and his discords and his contrariety and extended knowledge of everything—should have to come abroad. One need not censure the country; it is easier for us to emigrate than for America to change her civilization fast enough to please us. But why, IF there are serious people in America, desiring literature of America, literature accepting present conditions, rendering American life with sober fidelity—why, in heaven's name, is this book of New England eclogues given us under a foreign imprint?

Professors to the contrary notwithstanding, no one expects Jane Austen to be as interesting as Stendhal. A book about a dull, stupid, hemmed-in sort of life, by a person who has lived it, will never be as interesting as the work of some author who has comprehended many men's manners and seen many grades and conditions of existence. But Mr. Frost's people are distinctly real. Their speech is real; he has known them. I don't want much to meet them, but I know that they exist, and what is more, that they exist as he has portrayed them.

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Mr. Frost has humor, but he is not its victim. *The Code* has a pervasive humor, the humor of things as they are, not that of an author trying to be funny, or trying to "bring out" the ludicrous phase of some incident or character because he dares not rely on sheer presentation. There is nothing more nauseating to the developed mind than that sort of local buffoonery which the advertisements call "racy"—the village wit presenting some village joke which is worn out everywhere else. It is a great comfort to find someone who tries to give life, the life of the rural district, as a whole, evenly, and not merely as a hook to hang jokes on. The easiest thing to see about a man is an eccentric or worn-out garment, and one is godforsakenly tired of the post-Bret-Hartian, post-Mark-Twainian humorist.

Mr. Frost's work is not "accomplished," but it is the work of a man who will make neither concessions nor pretences. He will perform no money-tricks. His stuff sticks in your head—not his words, nor his phrases, nor his cadences, but his subject matter. You do not confuse one of his poems with another in your memory. His book is a contribution to American literature, the sort of sound work that will develop into very interesting literature if persevered in.

I don't know that one is called upon to judge between the poems in *North of Boston*. *The Death of the Hired Man* is perhaps the best, or *The Housekeeper*, though here the construction is a bit straggly. There are moments in *Mending Wall*. *The Black Cottage* is very clearly stated.

Ezra Pound

TWO KINGS

Philip the King and other Poems, by John Masefield. William Heinemann.

The King of the Dark Chamber, by Rabindranath Tagore. Macmillan.

Mr. Masefield's new book contains several poems already familiar to readers of *The English Review* and American periodicals—*Truth*, *August*, *1914*, *Biography*, *Ships* and *The River*; several shorter poems and translations, and a new dramatic poem from which the book takes its title. This new poem, *Philip the King*, is singularly effective. Whether it would have seemed so effective if it had been published before August first of this year, one can not say. Certainly it loses nothing by being published at this moment, when the "genius of empire" is again to be tested to some form of bitter conclusion. For Philip the Second of Spain was a man who had the genius of empire, and Mr. Masefield shows us at what a bitter cost that empire was won, and lost. Mr. Masefield is not the poet of victorious empire; he is too much the poet of life and of the significance of common human experience for that. The quiet depth of feeling, which has always been the most vital feature of his work, is shown to much better advantage in this book than in anything else that he has written. The spirit of Mr. Masefield's poem on the war, *August*, *1914*, in which he feels through the beauty of the English fields

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the unknown generations of dead men whose dumb lives contributed to that beauty—

Who, century after century, held these farms
And, looking out to watch the changing sky,
Heard, as we hear, the rumors and alarms
Of war at hand and danger pressing nigh—

this spirit is emphasized in *Philip the King* in many forceful passages of strength and beauty—not the less strong because their subtly revolutionary import is thus veiled in beauty. Perhaps, after all, an empire in defeat furnishes the most truthful source of study of empire. The froth of victory ignores the volume of the wave, as it ignores the waste and wreckage which is not cast up for reckoning until a later day. Mr. Noyes may celebrate the froth, but Mr. Masefield counts the wreckage.

One would like to dwell at greater length upon this poem, but the reader will gain more from reading it than one may suggest in a review.

In addition to these, there are in this volume one or two short poems and several translations from the Spanish and Portuguese, remarkable for their simplicity of diction and direct feeling—better models for the young poet than the more generally imitated narrative poems by Mr. Masefield. There is, throughout the book, less of the melodramatic and banal sentimentality noted in his narrative poems. There is greater restraint and greater strength, a more masculine expression. Yet it may be noted in conclusion that the cumulative feeling of the book is one of intense

sadness. Temperamentally Mr. Masefield has the tragic sense; the sense of beauty that is most poignant because of its impermanence; the nobility of human action reared upon frailty; the celebration of the moment that is the moment's death—

And no new stones laid where the trackway ends.

Is there no further assurance, no joy that transcends the joy's decease?

In *The King of the Dark Chamber*, Mr. Rabindranath Tagore indeed records a joy that it is impossible for many of us of the western mold of faith to attain to. No less sensitive to the moment's death, every moment's death is yet, for this poet, that moment's birth in a kingdom which is continuously active and in which death and negation have no part. The word mystic is too often misapplied to convey a precise impression, and it may be that for western readers the term used by Mr. Llewellyn Jones when he spoke of Mr. Tagore as "spiritual empyricist" will be most serviceable as a definition of the author's quality. *The King of the Dark Chamber*, first published in *The Drama* for May, 1914, is a dramatic expression of the reconciliation between the soul and God. A contrast wider than that between this drama, and the western conception of such a conciliation as recorded in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, could hardly be conceived. Perhaps it is because the western mind has had so little worthy imaginative food that the western soul has so slight an acquaintance with God, and that God, as Mr. Tagore once remarked, remains a stranger to the western soul.

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This is the play that Mr. Tagore read before a company of people in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to their complete mystification.

"I suppose," said one lady, at least courageous in voicing her impression, "I suppose that by the King of the dark chamber you mean the spirit of evil. And I suppose, that in your eastern, oriental way, you mean that we should not struggle against it, but give in to it, be reconciled; but that," drawing herself up proudly, "that is not our western way, Mr. Tagore—we *fight!*" It was the poet himself who repeated the story.

A. C. H.

OTHER REVIEWS

Borderlands and Thoroughfares, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.
Macmillan.

This poet has hewn his art out of shale and slate—stubborn materials which show harsh clefts and ridges, which scorn to be smooth and fine. He seems to be still learning—in fact, he has scarcely more than begun his work. But already the observer, standing not too near, may see that the figure he is hammering into shape has large lines, massiveness, structure—a lonely monumental dignity.

Mr. Gibson has deliberately studied the poor—British peasants and laborers, tramps and vagabonds. One does not feel in his poems that pre-natal intimacy, which exists between Mr. Robert Frost and his New England farmer neighbors; but one does feel knowledge, insight, and sure

imaginative sympathy. Sometimes he slips up in his phrasing—do English “hinds” say *ere*, for example?—and no doubt the hinds themselves could find graver faults. But behind the realism of his scenic effects—the truth to character and environment as he sees them—is a realization of that limitless background of mystery which widens all human lives. His hinds and tramps feel airs from Arcady and salt mists from a polar sea. His London burglar must have a “night in the heather,” and let his imagination rove over the wilds. His “old hind” in *The Queen’s Crags* was a poet once, when in his youth he loved a circus-rider.

I see her tripping now into the ring,
With flashing eyes and teeth,
Clean-limbed, and mettlesome as the coal-black
 mare,
Coal-black from mane to fetlocks,
That pawed and champed to greet her. . . .

And the forty lines which follow send us racing round the ring with her, and give us the young man’s exaltation even through the old man’s memory.

In short, Mr. Gibson is working out an interpretation of life. It is sculpturesque rather than pictorial, and the light upon it is not sunshine but the veiled gray monotone of an English November. The figure which begins to emerge is larger than life and not exact in realism, but it is nobly descriptive. It gives us the profounder instincts and higher imaginings of people deeply rooted in reality, people whom harsh life strips bare of luxury and pretence.

Besides the three dialogues in this book, we have nearly thirty brief poems. Through all of them one feels the

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wind blowing, and most of them carry a suggestion of the eeriness of common things, as in *The Lodging House*:

And when at last I stand outside
My garret door, I hardly dare
To open it,
Lest, when I fling it wide,
With candle lit
And reading in my only chair,
I find myself already there.

A minor but most welcome detail is this poet's love of animals. Certain horses and dogs live in these pages, especially that noble-minded bitch, Mabel—

Stubborn, wild and white,
Snuffing the wet air of the windy night.

And the last poem pictures

—the sun-enkindled fire
Of gorse upon the moor-top.

Indeed, we are out-of-doors in wild places throughout this volume. H. M.

Sword Blades and Poppy Seed, by Amy Lowell. Macmillan.

Miss Lowell's title-poem—or rather, her initial poem which interprets the book's title—is a kind of *apologia*, a presentation of her ideals as an artist. Poetry, she insists, must either pierce or soothe the heart of man, and her manner of telling the illustrative dream-tale of a poet's visit to the Dealer in Words presents the utmost vigor—not to say rigor—of her style. We have stripped and trenchant metaphors, as in these lines:

All day my thoughts had lain as dead,
Unborn and bursting in my head. . . .
My table seemed a graveyard, full
Of coffins waiting burial.

We have vivid descriptive passages, pictures painted in a few bold strokes, like these of Wedgwood and Chinese porcelains:

There was dusky blue of Wedgwood ware,
The carved white figures fluttering there
Like leaves adrift upon the air. . . .

These porcelains with unknown hues
Of reds dyed purple and greens turned blues,
Of lustres with so evanescent a sheen
Their colors are felt, but never seen.

And lastly, we have the poet's sense of consecration, expressed in the conditions imposed by the merciless Dealer:

The money I demand is Life,
Your nervous force, your joy, your strife. . . .
Who buy of me must simply pay
Their whole existence quite away.

And he describes the sacrifice in detail.

If at times one feels inclined to quarrel with Miss Lowell's technical experiments; if she does not quite convince us, for example, through such a poem as *The Forsaken*, that Paul Fort's obscure measures and empirical internal rhymes may be as effective in English as in French: still one must admit her learning and her artistry. She is a good workman, even though at times the mere workmanship is a bit too apparent. She lives in her own time, not in the Victorian or the Elizabethan; and knows what is going on in her art, not only in New York and London, but in Paris. And beyond her intimate knowledge of French is a cosmopolitan consciousness which may even embrace remoter capitals. In short, her book, unlike so many which belie

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their twentieth-century date, does not impose upon us either sloppy technique or a purely domestic and provincial point of view.

Miss Lowell has submitted to the stark discipline of the *Imagistes*, but she has not, like most of them, altogether discarded rhyme. The long poems are all in rhyme, and mostly in stanzas; of these *Max Brueck* is perhaps the least effective, while *A Tale of Starvation* and *Sancta Maria* are intimate and poignant character studies. Among the shorter poems are one or two fine sonnets, and several pieces, like *Apology* and *Patience*, play delicately with rhymes without losing feeling in their meshes.

But it is in the freer forms that this poet gets her finest effects. Such poems as *A Lady, Music, White and Green*, are well-nigh flawless in their beauty—perfect “images.” Or this from *The Captured Goddess*:

It was her wings,
Goddess!
Who stepped over the clouds,
And laid her rainbow feathers
Aslant on the currents of the air.

H. M.

The Single Hound, by Emily Dickinson. Little, Brown & Co.

Emily Dickinson, New England spinster of the nineteenth century, was an unconscious and uncatalogued *Imagiste*. She had the visual imagination, the love of economy in line and epithet, the rigorous austerity of style, and the individual subtlety of rhythm, demanded by the

code of the contemporary poets who group themselves under that title. Born a Puritan, her shy soul brooded upon the abstract, but her wildly rebellious pagan imagination at once transmuted the abstract into the concrete, gave it form and color. Who can forget this image of despair?—

The mind is smooth—no motion—
Contented as the eye
Upon the forehead of a Bust
That knows it cannot see.

Or this of fame?—

Fame is a fickle food
Upon a shifting plate,
Whose table once a Guest, but not
The second time, is set;
Whose crumbs the crows inspect,
And with ironic caw
Flap past it to the Farmer's corn:
Men eat of it and die.

Mere existence was such an incredible ecstasy to this poet that she could not endure the rough-and-tumble of ordinary human intercourse. Her fiery spirit went through life—

Attended by a Single Hound
Its own Identity—

and encountered unendurable emotions in a tiny cottage and garden, in sisterly affection, in the passing homage of more or less detached lovers. But to the last she was impenetrable, unattainable, in spite of her iridescent personal charm. She was, even to her own niece, "not daily bread, but star-dust."

There is a solitude of space,
A solitude of sea,
A solitude of death, but these

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Society shall be,
Compared with that profounder site,
That polar privacy,
A Soul admitted to Itself:
Finite Infinity.

The present volume may not increase the measure of her spiritual height and depth, or add new lustre to her beauty of soul, to the star-like fidelity of her genius or the lithe nudity of her art. These were established by the two earlier collections, published soon after the poet's death. But nothing in those precious books is finer than a few poems in this one, which doubtless represents the final effort of her niece and literary executor to extricate Emily Dickinson's poems from a mass of ragged papers, and preserve them for lovers of her temperamental art. *H. M.*

Trees and Other Poems, by Joyce Kilmer. George H. Doran, New York.

Joyce Kilmer has recently done a pleasant, and perhaps an important thing—he has rediscovered simplicity. In the whole of this very slight little volume there is hardly a word or a technical device that could not be used with surety in a nursery rhyme. Yet in the best of it is revealed a simple naïveté of soul which reminds one forcibly of *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*, and which pleases in the same childlike fashion. The title poem, *Trees*, originally published in *POETRY*, is peculiarly successful in this mood. It has an unusual, haunting poignancy. Successful also, though reminiscent of the more deliberate simplicity of Oliver Wendell Holmes, are *The Twelve-Forty-Five, Martin*, and *Servant Girl and Grocer's Boy*. But simplicity must be

perfect, and Mr. Kilmer has not always been able to compass it. Much of the verse in this volume is very slight indeed.

The following little bit on Easter is so delightful that in spite of the fact that POETRY published it first we must reprint it.

The air is like a butterfly
With frail blue wings.
The happy earth looks at the sky
And sings.

E. T.

The Reverberate Hills, by Edwin Oppenheim. Constable & Co., London.

The poems in this little volume are not verse for verse's sake, but verse for the mountains' sake. They are in no way remarkable technically, but they are so full of genuine love of the mountains—of the vast, white loneliness of the Alps—and so full of sympathetic observation of the life of man and beast in the great solitudes, that they need no other justification.

E. T.

CORRESPONDENCE

A LYRICAL CHALLENGE

To the Editor:

In the August number of your admirable little magazine, you reviewed Louis Untermeyer's latest volume, *Challenge*, in a most bewildering manner. Luckily, Untermeyer's poetry is well and widely known. A dozen poems from this volume—such as *Prayer*, *Caliban in the Coal*

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Mines, and *On the Birth of a Child*—have been reprinted from Maine to Miami, from Hackensack to Nome. Which is helpful, for familiarity with any one of them enables the reader

To meet with confidence the cynic jeers,
the astonishing objections of this reviewer.

The editor finds two faults with this singer. First, that his phrases are "worn and tawdry," "conventional trappings and claptrap utterances." This of Louis Untermeyer! It is true—candor wrings from me the reluctant admission—he does not sing of *Mumpodorus*, *Nimmin*, *The Bulmenian Literati*, a young lady's *Lar* (I trust this reference is not improper); "tomato cans . . . scaly, as leviathans ozily crawling": gems culled from verse in this same issue of the magazine. These are not worn and tawdry. Quite the reverse. But to return to Louis Untermeyer and poetry, the reverse of this criticism is true. His poetry is the aggressive opposite of "worn and tawdry." The reviewer made quite a slip when she exhibited as samples of this alleged fault such phrases as "meet indifference with a joyful rage," "vigorous discontent," and the couplet:

The scornful and untroubled skies,
The cold complacency of earth.

True, these lines are not epoch-making. They scarcely mark a cosmic crisis. But they are unworn, fresh, apt. The stigma tagged upon them indicates, let us hope, nothing more than a surprising lapse of critical ability.

The second objection, that his art is muscle and brawn, instead of a singing with the voice, is as remote from the facts. Untermeyer is first of all a singer, a lyricist; and his ever-present loveliness of song, if anything, at times beguiles the attention from his message.

Most amazing of all are the reviewer's preferences. *Haunted* and *The Shell to the Pearl* are served up as the finest things in the book. They are not the worst; but they are neither noteworthy, nor fairly representative. Our editor does not even discover the exquisite whimsey of *God's Youth*, the poignant passion of *Tribute*, the clear loveliness of *Summons*, *The Great Carousal*, and several sonnets, nor the deep lyric inspiration of *Caliban in the Coal Mines*.

We are swamped today beneath a flood of verse, ranging from the exotic pseudo-daring of the Imagists, and the blundering polyrhythmics, to the refined quavering of the hang-overs of former times. Out of this chaos and confusion comes this brave challenge, this clear voice, healthy, vivid, melodious. Let me quote one of the best poems in the book, *Caliban in the Coal Mines*, as a cumulative answer to all objections:

God, we don't like to complain—
We know that the mine is no lark—
But—there's the pools from the rain;
But—there's the cold and the dark.

God, You don't know what it is—
You, in Your well-lighted sky.

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Watching the meteors whizz,
Warm, with the sun always by.

God, if You had but the moon
Stuck in Your Cap for a lamp,
Even You'd tire of it soon,
Down in the dark and the damp.

Nothing but blackness above,
And nothing that moves but the cars—
God, if You wish for our love,
Fling us a handful of stars!

Clement Wood.

NOTE. The reviewer of *Challenge* did not fail to read *Caliban in the Coal Mines*, that "cumulative answer to all objections."

FROM LONDON: DEATH OF A FRENCH POET

I have just seen in today's *Chronicle* that Charles Péguy, poet, socialist, editor of *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine, est mort pour la patrie* at the battle of the Marne. I have been glancing at one or two of his essays in *Les Cahiers* and in his *Oeuvres Choiesies*. He wasn't a personality which appealed to me, though I knew him perfectly well by repute. His work always seemed to be more political and socialist than literary. But here is a piece of rather good emotional writing which I struck by accident. It is called, *O flags of the past, so fair in histories, and runs thus:*

We are a sacrificed generation. We are not only conquered—that would be nothing. There are glorious defeats, sounding disasters, more fixed, better preservers of glory, finer, more accepted, more commemorated than any triumph. But our defeat is the worst of all, an obscure defeat; we shall not even be de-

From London: Death of a French Poet

spised, we shall be ignored, perhaps we shall be grotesque. There are defeats—Waterloo was one—which more than victories are fixed in the memories of man, in the common memory of humanity. We shall be niggards, we shall be little, we shall be ordinary, we shall be mediocre; or rather we shall not be at all. Nobody will notice us. We shall pass unperceived. . . . We shall never be great; we shall never be known; we shall never be written of.

The date of that is 1909, but there is still much of the bitterness of 1870 in it.

Péguy was a poet as well as an eloquent prose-writer. I have before me three books of his poetry published in *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine: La Tapisserie de Sainte Gèneviève et de Jeanne d'Arc, La Tapisserie de Notre Dame, and Ève*. The last is a huge long poem of four hundred pages written entirely in quatrains. In this admittedly hasty, absurdly superficial, note I can't attempt to criticise it. It gives a rather peculiar and epic effect by repeating one line at the beginning of about four to ten stanzas in sequence. Thus:—

Et ce grand général qui prit tout un royaume
(Et ce n'était pas rien le royaume de France).
Dans le dernier climat et sous le dernier dome
N'aura pas plus vielli que la jeune espérance.

Et ce grand général qui saisit un royaume
(Et quel saisissement, le royaume de France),
Dans le dernier climat et sous le dernier dome
Sera du meme jeu que la jeune espérance.

It is a poem which quickly bores; nevertheless it has its points. Note the martial subject in these verses taken quite at hazard.

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I gather from another book, *Le Mystère des Saints Innocents*, that M. Péguy was a Roman Catholic as well as a militarist. Indeed he belonged to the group of reactionaries satirized by France in *La Révolte des Anges*. At the battle of the Marne Péguy probably fought somewhere near Guy Charles Cros, one of the most satirical and delightful of the new poets of France. Thus every shade of intellectual opinion as well as of political and religious difference is actually represented in the French army. One of Péguy's essays seeks to prove that "there was heroism (in the large sense) in a republic." He had it proved to him before he died.

Richard Aldington.

Note. Another French poet now fighting with the Allies is Nicholas Beauduin, leader of the *Paroxysmistes*, and editor of that interesting quarterly, *La Vie des Lettres*.

NOTES

Mr. D. H. Lawrence, author of *Love Poems and Others*, and *Sons and Lovers* (Kennerley), is one of the most prominent of the younger English poets. POETRY introduced him to its readers last January.

Mr. John Rodker is a young American who lives in England, and whose first book of poems will soon be published there.

Mr. Francis Howard Williams, of Philadelphia, is the author of a number of plays in verse, and of *The Flute-*

Player and Other Poems, Ad Astra, and The Burden-Bearer, of which Lincoln is the hero.

Alice Corbin (Mrs. Wm. P. Henderson), of Chicago, is the author of *The Spinning Woman of the Sky* (R. F. Seymour Co.).

Mr. Seumas O'Sullivan is one of the younger Irish poets. He has published little as yet.

Mr. Philip Becker Goetz, of Buffalo, N. Y., is the author of *Kallirrhoe, Poems, Interludes, and The Summons of the King*.

Mr. Scharmél Iris was born in Italy and brought to Chicago in early childhood. His *Lyrics of a Lad* will soon be published by the R. F. Seymour Co.

Mrs. Eunice Tietjens, of Chicago, has contributed to numerous magazines; also Antoinette De Coursey Patterson (Mrs. T. H. H.) of Philadelphia, whose first book will soon appear.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Lincoln at Richmond, A Dramatic Epos of the Civil War, by Denton J. Snider. Sigma Publishing Co., St. Louis, Mo.

Tuskawanta, by George H. Babcock. Privately printed.

Some People Marry—A Play, by Robert A. Kasper. Richard G. Badger.

In Deep Places, by Amelia Josephine Burr. George H. Doran Co.

Trees and Other Poems, by Joyce Kilmer. George H. Doran Co.

You and I, by Harriet Monroe. Macmillan.

Hans Breitmann's Ballads, by Charles Godfrey Leland. Houghton-Mifflin Co.

The Cry of Youth, by Harry Kemp. Kennerley.

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The Sharing, by Agnes Lee. Sherman, French & Co.

La Chanson de la Vie, by Georges Turpin. Eugène Figuière & Cie. Paris.

The Flying Dutchman, by Richard Wagner: English verse by Oliver Huckel. Thomas Y. Crowell Co.

Rienzi, by Richard Wagner: English verse by Oliver Huckel. Crowell Co.

Hints for Young Writers, by O. S. Marden. Crowell Co.

The Story of Beowulf, Translated from Anglo-Saxon by Ernest J. B. Kirtlan. Crowell Co.

The Convolvulus, by Allen Norton. Claire Marie.

Life-Colors, by Adeline Hinckley. Neale Pub. Co., New York.

Philip the King, by John Masefield. Macmillan.

Poems, by Clinton Scollard. Houghton-Mifflin Co.

Voices of the Silent Things, by William Stapleton Long. The Gorham Press.

Poems, by Leonard Lanson Cline. Poet-Lore Co.

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A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

JANUARY, 1915

The Troubadour Madison Cawein
 Five Poems Edith Wyatt
 Clover—April Weather—Summer Hail—To
 F. W.—On the Great Plateau.

Annie Shore and Johnnie Doon . Patrick Orr
 The Lost Kingdom . Ethel Talbot Scheffauer
 Two Poems Zoe Akins
 Conquered—The Wanderer.

Epigrammes Remy De Gourmont
 Two Poems Frances Gregg
 Pageant—To H. D.

Qualche Cosa Veduta Hall Roffey
 The Musicmaker's Child

. Miriam Allen de Ford
 Modern Music Alice Ormond Campbell
 Three Poems Lee Wilson Dodd

The Temple—Only Not to Be Too Early Old—
 The Comrade.

Comments and Reviews

Contemporary Poetry and the Universities—
 Modern German Poetry—French Poets and
 the War—Reviews—Our Contemporaries—

The Death of Madison Cawein—Notes.

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MoPoRs

JANUARY, 1915

THE TROUBADOUR



NIGHT, they say, is no man's friend:
And at night he met his end
In the woods of Trebizend.

Hate crouched near him as he strode
Down the darkness of the road,
Where my lord seemed some huge toad.

Eyes of murder glared and burned
At each bend of road he turned,
Or where wild the torrent churned.

And with Death we stood and stared
From the bush as by he fared;
But he never looked or cared.

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He went singing; and a rose
Lay upon his heart's repose
With what thoughts of her—who knows?

He had done no other wrong
But to sing a simple song—
"I have loved you, loved you long."

And my lady smiled and sighed;
Gave a rose and looked moist-eyed,
And forgot she was a bride.

And my lord saw; gave commands.
I was of his robber bands:
Love should perish at our hands.

Young the knight was. He should sing
Nevermore of love and spring,
Or of any gentle thing.

When he stole at midnight's hour
To my lady's forest bower,
We were hidden near the tower.

In the woods of Trebizend
There he met an evil end:
Night, you know, is no man's friend.

The Troubadour

He had fought in fort and field;
Borne for years a stainless shield,
And in strength to none would yield.

But we seized him unaware;
Bound and hung and stripped him bare;
Left him to the wild boars there.

Never has my lady known.
But she often sits alone,
Weeping when my lord is gone.

Night, they say, is no man's friend:
In the woods of Trebizend
There he met an evil end.

Now my old lord sleeps in peace,
While my lady—each one sees—
Waits, and keeps her memories.

Madison Cawein

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POEMS

CLOVER

The clover's grassy breath,
To him who listeneth
 Upon the pastured lea,
Is like the monotone
Of some far sheep-bell, blown
 From tranquil Arcady.

The airs of that last rose,
That late and crimson blows
 And frosted dies,
Smell, as in green and dew,
The first, first rose that blew
 In waking Paradise.

What fragrance, ages hence,
Shall tell the listening sense
 Of men who guess—
Men whose far lives shall range
On paths remote and strange—
 Our happiness?

APRIL WEATHER

If you could have a perfect day
 To dream of when your life were done,
Would you choose one all clear, all gay—
 If you could have a perfect day—
The airs above the wide green way
 Sheer virgin blue with crystal sun?—
If you could have a perfect day
 To dream of when your life were done.

Or would you have it April's way,
 Haphazard rain, haphazard sun,
Divine and sordid, clear and gray,
 Dyed like these hours' own work and play;
All shot with stains of tears and clay,
 Haphazard pain, haphazard fun—
If you could have a perfect day
 To dream of when your life were done?

SUMMER HAIL

Once the heavens' gabled door
Opened: down a stabled floor,
Down the thunders, something galloped far and wide,
Glancing far and fleet

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Down the silver street—
And I knew of nothing, nothing else beside.

*Pitty patty polt—
Shoe the wild colt!
Here a nail! There a nail!
Pitty patty polt!*

Good and badness, die away.
Strength and swiftness down the day,
Dapple happy down my glancing silver street!
Oh, the touch of summer cold!—
Beauty swinging quick and bold,
Dipping, dapping where the distant roof-tops meet!

*Pitty patty polt—
Shoe the wild colt!*

Listen, dusty care:
Through a magic air,
Once I watched the way of perfect splendor ride,
Swishing far and gray,
Buoyant and gay—
And I knew of nothing, nothing else beside.
Good and badness, go your ways,
Vanish far and fleet.
Strength and swiftness run my days,
Down my silver street.
Little care, forevermore
Be you lesser than before.

Summer Hail

Mighty frozen rain,
Come! oh, come again!
Let the heavens' door be rended
With the touch of summer cold—
Dappling hoof-beats clatter splendid,
Infinitely gay and bold!

*Pitty patty polt—
Shoe the wild colt!
Here a nail and there a nail!
Pitty patty polt!*

Once the heavens' gabled door
Opened: down the stabled floor,
Down the thunders something galloped wide and far;
Something dappled far and fleet,
Glancing down my silver street,
And I saw the ways of life just as they are.

*Pitty patty polt.
Shoe the wild colt!
Here a nail! There a nail!
Pitty patty polt!*

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TO F. W.

You are my companion
Down the silver road,
Still and many-changing,
Infinitely changing.
You are my companion.

Something sings in lives—
Days of walking on and on,
Deep beyond all singing,
Wonderful past singing.

Wonderful our road,
Long and many-changing,
Infinitely changing.
This, more wonderful—
We are here together,
You and I together,
I am your companion;
You are my companion,
My own, true companion.

Let the road-side fade:
Morning on the mountain-top,
Hours along the valley,
Days of walking on and on,
Pulse away in silence,

On the Great Plateau

In eternal silence.
Let the world all fade,
Break and pass away.
Yet will this remain,
Deep beyond all singing,
My own true companion,
Beautiful past singing:
We were here together—
On this earth together;
I was your companion,
You were my companion,
My own true companion.

ON THE GREAT PLATEAU

In the Santa Clara Valley, far away and far away,
Cool-breathed waters dip and dally, linger towards another
day—
Far and far away—far away.

Slow their floating step, but tireless, terraced down the great
Plateau.
Towards our ways of steam and wireless, silver-paced the
brook-beds go.
Past the ladder-walled Pueblos, past the orchards, pear and
quince,

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Where the back-locked river's ebb flows, miles and miles
the valley glints,
Shining backwards, singing downwards, towards horizons
blue and bay.

All the roofs the roads ensconce so dream of visions far
away—

Santa Cruz and Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Santa Fé.

Ancient, sacred fears and faiths, ancient, sacred faiths and
fears—

Some were real, some were wraiths—Indian, Franciscan
years,

Built the Khivas, swung the bells; while the wind sang plain
and free,

"Turn your eyes from visioned hells!—look as far as you
can see!"

In the Santa Clara Valley, far away and far away,

Dying dreams divide and dally, crystal-terraced waters sally—

Linger towards another day, far and far away—far away.

As you follow where you find them, up along the high
Plateau,

In the hollows left behind them Spanish chapels fade below—

Shaded court and low corrals. In the vale the goat-herd
browses.

Hollyhocks are seneschals by the little buff-walled houses.

Over grassy swale and alley have you ever seen it so—

Up the Santa Clara Valley, riding on the Great Plateau?

On the Great Plateau

Past the ladder-walled Pueblos, past the orchards, pear and
 quince,
Where the trenchèd waters' ebb flows, miles and miles the
 valley glints,
Shining backwards, singing downwards towards horizons
 blue and bay.
All the haunts the bluffs ensconce so breathe of visions far
 away,
As you ride near Ildefonso back again to Santa Fé.
Pecos, mellow with the years, tall-walled Taos—who can
 know
Half the storied faiths and fears haunting Green New
 Mexico?
Only from her open places down arroyos blue and bay,
One wild grace of many graces dallies towards another day.
Where her yellow tufa crumbles, something stars and grasses
 know,
Something true, that crowns and humbles, shimmers from
 the Great Plateau:
Blows where cool-paced waters dally from the stillness of
 Puyé,
Down the Santa Clara Valley through the world from far
 away—
Far and far away—far away.

Edith Wyatt

ANNIE SHORE AND JOHNNIE DOON

Annie Shore, 'twas, sang last night
Down in South End saloon;
A tawdry creature in the light,
Painted cheeks, eyes over bright,
Singing a dance-hall tune.

I'd be forgetting Annie's singing—
I'd not have thought again—
But for the thing that cried and fluttered
Through all the shrill refrain—
Youth crying above foul words, cheap music,
And innocence in pain.

They sentenced Johnnie Doon today
For murder, stark and grim;
Death's none too dear a price, they say,
For such-like men as him to pay;
No need to pity him!

And Johnnie Doon I'd not be pitying—
I could forget him now—
But for the childish look of trouble
That fell across his brow,
For the twisting hands he looked at dumbly
As if they'd sinned, he knew not how.

IN THE MOHAVE

As I rode down the arroyo through yuccas belled with bloom
I saw a last year's stalk lift dried hands to the light,
Like age at prayer for death within a careless room,
Like one by day o'ertaken, whose sick desire is night.

And as I rode I saw a lean coyote lying
All perfect as in life upon a silver dune,
Save that his feet no more could flee the harsh light's spying,
Save that no more his shadow would cleave the sinking moon.

O cruel land, where form endures, the spirit fled!
You chill the sun for me with your gray sphinx's smile,
Brooding in the bright silence above your captive dead,
Where beat the heart of life so brief, so brief a while!

Patrick Orr

THE LOST KINGDOM

In the dead city where the waning moon
Lights the strange faces of the carven kings
With subtle smiles, and curiously each rune
Upon the emeralds of their signet-rings

Paints with dull light—there upon each eyelid
The weary-footed Sleep sits sorrowful,
And calm upon the painted pyramid
The night-owl, with his bleary eyes sad and dull

Keeps watch; and desert lions, hungry-eyed
Prowl through the palaces all pale with gold
Under the moon; where, even as they died
In some phantasmal ruin, centuries old,

Lie jewelled guards with golden scimitars
And glorious women, wound with green and red,
So beautiful and evil under the stars,
Not even the gray wolves rend them, fair and dead.

Ethel Talbot Scheffauer

CONQUERED

O pale! O vivid! dear!
O disillusioned eyes
Forever near!
O Dream, arise!

I will not turn away
From the face I loved again;
Your beauty may sway
My life with pain.

I will drink the wine you pour,
I will seek to put asunder
Our ways no more—
O Love! O Wonder!

THE WANDERER

The ships are lying in the bay,
The gulls are swinging round their spars;
My soul as eagerly as they
Desires the margin of the stars.

So much do I love wandering,
So much I love the sea and sky,
That it will be a piteous thing
In one small grave to lie.

Zoë Akins

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EPIGRAMMES

JE N'AIME PLUS

Je n'aime plus les fleurs, elles meurent trop vite.
À peine si leur coeur s'entr'ouvre et nous invite
 À les aimer,
Qu'on les sent résignées, inévitable rite,
 À se fermer.

Je n'aime plus les femmes, leurs sourires sont trop fous.
À peine si nos coeurs ont palpité pour vous,
 Vaines maîtresses,
Vos levres se détournent et vos mains sont des houx
 À nos tendresses.

LA VASQUE

La vasque s'est remplie peu à peu de feuilles mortes.
N'y cherchez pas d'eau pure. Celle que la pluie apporte
A été bue goutte à goutte par les oiseaux.
Il n'y reste rien que la mort. C'est un tombeau.

Mais ne regardez pas au fond parmi les feuilles.
Quelque chose s'agite encore dans ce cercueil:
Des rêves, des tendresses, des troubles, des désirs,
Je ne sais quoi d'absurde qui ne veut pas mourir.

Remy De Gourmont

PAGEANT

Silently, through the misted, silver quiet,
They come.

And the feet that were dancing,
And the music and laughter,
Are still.

And the wreaths that were
Of poppies and vine-leaves,
And the sheaves of wheat,
And the purple fruit of the vineyards
That they bore in their hands,
And the colored robes that they wore,
Were of one tint and transparence,
Silver.

And lightly they passed.

And music,

Long sought and forgotten music,
Lifted the mists.

And One, holding a scourge
Whose devious flames

Sang,

Bade them kneel down;

And each ineffable Victim

Went forth,

Bearing a golden, never-healing wound.

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TO H. D.

You were all loveliness to me—
Sea-mist, the spring,
The blossoming of trees,
The wind,
Giver-of-Dreams.
Then—
A wistful silence guarded you about,
As in the spring
Iris and anemone are guarded.
And like a flame
Your beauty burned and wrought me
Into a bell,
Whose single note
Was echo of your silence.
Now—
You sing.
And I, muted,
Yet vibrate throughout,
Stirred by your hymn's immemorial burden;
"Spare us from loveliness!"

Frances Gregg

QUALCHE COSA VEDUTA

The gold green of the trees curved over the lawn,
And the lights of the world centred in a yellow iris
Flaming upwards from the straight stem.

People passed . . .

They passed out of the wood into the wood again;
Dark gray like the mould.

A beautiful woman in gray colors came:
Tall, slim, golden lilies on her dress were woven.
The iris joined her, for a moment they walked together.

The iris returned again.

The light of the world was centred in the iris
The woman faded
 for ever.

A bent old man arrived, an old distorted man;
His legs short like a tortoise, his body long and baggy;
His face was ugly, the nose knobbed, the lines and wrinkles
 alive.

He folded a newspaper with work-distorted hands.
He ambled on; drab, worn, and shabby,

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Shuffling the dim sands.

The iris joined him, they marched on together.

She will never leave him.

The gold green of the trees curves over the lawn,

And the light of the world centres in a yellow iris:

The old man and the iris march on forever.

Hall Roffey

THE MUSICMAKER'S CHILD

Long time my Mother lived in Weir.

A maiden, waiting for a man to take her:
Then, for the love of his blue eyes,
She wandered after Weir the musicmaker.

I know the burden of the tide,
I catch the cry and moan of every breaker,
I read the secrets of the sands—
I, the child of Weir the musicmaker.

In the white hush before the storm,
I hear a heavy calling from the ocean—
The souls of men who drowned at sea,
Aweary of its restless, flowing motion.

"I am choked with sand,"
Says Jan the fisher.
"A pearl in each hand,"
Says Jan the fisher.

"One for the earth,
My grave to be;
One for the priest
Will pray for me."

And Michael of the Wild Rocks, his bright beard streaming,
"Give me Christian burial, and a stone above my head!

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For I've a wife," says he, "and my babe is on her knee;
And she has naught to weep on but a memory of the dead."

Old Fergus lies sleeping, and calls in his sleep,
His white hair all matted with weeds of the sea:
"I have Shawn and Colom who watch for me—
Shall my two sons not call me from out the deep?"

And the soul of Peter Day,
That young, young lad,
Whose quick, warm heart
Was all the wealth he had,

"O dear Lord God," he prays,
"There on the shore
Was a girl used to walk
Who'll never walk there more.

"It's in church and holy ground
That Janet lies:
For my grave next hers,
I will give up Paradise."

Lord God has heeded Peter Day;
He has thrown his body on the white sand stretches:
And they have laid him by a grave
That's two years overgrown with docks and vetches.

The Musicmaker's Child

"Is it not strange," they say in Culm,
"That he alone came in upon the breaker?"
I smile my wise smile to myself—
I, the child of Weir the musicmaker.

Miriam Allen de Ford

MODERN MUSIC

Men call me Longing; and I come to you
To lure and taunt you in the graying dawn
Or breathless even, when, the sun withdrawn,
The shallow moon hangs empty in the blue.
Chill spring is mine, when eager winds pursue
The tree-boughs traced with chary fringe of tawn,
And trenchant blades fresh-pierce the russet lawn,—
Mute questions asked, despaired, and asked anew.

I am that hunger which all mad Youth is,
Fretful and faint, with fever-burning eye;
Its thin arms, dread with sweet concavities,
Reached out to wisps that beckon and deny—
Strange unresolving chords, and ironies
That stir, excite, yet never satisfy.

Alice Ormond Campbell

THE TEMPLE

Hear me, brother!
Boldly I stepped into the Temple,
Into the Temple where the God dwells
Veiled with Seven Veils,
Into the Temple of Unbroken Silence:
And my joyous feet shod with crimson sandals
Rang out on the tessellated pavement,
Rang out fearlessly
Like a challenge and a cry!
And there—in that shrouded solitude,
There—before the Seven Veils,
There—because of youth and youth's madness,
Because of love and love's unresting heart,
There did I sing three songs!
And my first song praised the eyes of a wanton;
And my second song praised the lips of a wanton;
And my third song praised the feet of a dancing girl!

Thus did I desecrate the Temple,
Thus did I stand before the Seven Veils,
Proudly!
Thus did I wait upon the God's Voice—
Proudly!—
And the sudden shaft of death

The Temple

But no Voice stirred the Seven Veils,
Though I stood long

And my knees shook,
My bones were afraid

Swiftly I loosed the crimson sandals,
And, tearing them from off my feet,
Crept shuddering forth!

Hear me, brother!
Now am I as one stricken with palsy,
Now am I sick with the close ache of terror,
Now am I as one who, having tasted poison,
Cowers, waiting for the pang!

For the God spake not

And the sense of my littleness is upon me:
And I am a worm in my own sight,
Trodden and helpless;
A casual grain of sand
Indistinguishable amid a million grains:
And I take no pleasure now in youth
Nor in youth's madness,
In love
Nor in love's unresting heart;

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And I praise no longer the eyes of a wanton,
Nor the lips of a wanton,
Nor the light feet of a dancing girl.

ONLY NOT TO BE TOO EARLY OLD

Only not to be too early old;
Only not to feel too soon the day
Emptied of all desire, unyielding gray;
Only not to sink too weary and cold
For fireside mirth, for friendly talk, for free
Soul-kindling thought "about it and about";
Nay, I would rather end life in a rout,
Stricken low by folly, dropping with a laugh,
Than creep thus tamely out
Trailing the tatters of my mystery
To the dull cadence of an epitaph.

THE COMRADE

Call me friend or foe,
Little I care!
I go with all who go
Daring to dare.

I am the force,
I am the fire,
I am the secret source
Of desire.

I am the urge,
The spur and thong:
Moon of the tides that surge
Into song!

Call me friend or foe,
Little care I,
I go with all who go
Singing to die.

Call me friend or foe. . .
Taking to give,
I go with all who go
Dying to live

Lee Wilson Dodd

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND THE UNIVERSITIES

I HAVE had occasion lately to speak with several university professors of literature on the subject of contemporary poetry. In each case I have surprised a look of polite inquiry whenever any poet of a date more recent than 1890 was mentioned. Of course there were exceptions that proved the rule. Mr. Alfred Noyes and Mr. W. B. Yeats have lectured before American colleges; Mr. Masfield's fame has reached the classic walls. But these are the exceptions. My surprise was perhaps the greatest when I encountered the head of a certain Romance department, expecting from him some illumination on the subject of modern French poetry. If he were living in France, would his interest have stopped short with the French symbolists? Would he have come, as it were, to the brink of a precipice with Baudelaire, Verlaine, and Mallarmé, and consider himself, even at that, as the most ultra-modern of his kind?

Why is it that the college literary courses establish no direct contact with modern life in so far as poetry is concerned? The novel fares better. The student who is fortunate enough to have attended lectures by Mr. Robert Herrick does not venture out into the world supposing that the novel stopped suddenly with Thackeray or Dickens. But the average student is likely to leave college firmly rooted in the belief that poetry ceased with Shelley or Keats, or Tennyson or Browning, as the case may be.

Contemporary Poetry and the Universities

A scientific department conducted as a literary department is conducted, with no consideration of the achievements of the last thirty years, would be a disgrace to any college.

It is the gap unbridged by the university course which is of most vital consequence to the student; and when, after much false subsequent groping, that gap is bridged finally, the student is often no longer a student, and the first flush of the formative, creative period is passed. College students in literary courses remind one of rows of bleaching celery, banked and covered with earth; they are so carefully protected from any coloring contact with the ideas of the living present.

The other day the literary department of Princeton telegraphed to Mr. Vachel Lindsay to come down and recite his poems and talk about poetry to the students. This, for an American poet, is, so far as I know, a unique phenomenon. It is characteristic of the academic system that William Vaughn Moody was required to correct prose themes rather than to speak directly, during all the time that he was connected with the University of Chicago, on the subject of contemporary poetry. One could name at least a dozen living American poets whose creative enthusiasm might prove stimulating to members of the younger generation—if it were decided to expose the students to it.

Of late the modern drama and the modern novel have been considered not wholly unworthy of academic consideration, but modern poetry and modern art remain the outcasts and pariahs of the institutions of formal education.

A. C. H.

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MODERN GERMAN POETRY

I

In the notes which follow, I shall touch briefly upon some aspects of modern German poetry, suggesting the problems which beset the poets, and indicating as far as possible, the line upon which they have approached their task. A consideration of a poet's outlook is of primary importance, because, other things being equal, it is upon this that the value of his work and its chances of survival ultimately depend.

Europe has been chary of admitting the existence of a German culture. France, ever jealous of art and letters outside her borders, has shrugged her shoulders contemptuously. England, suspicious of anything she cannot readily understand, has been consistently skeptical. Nevertheless, there can be no possible doubt of the reality of German culture; and, in the light of present events, it would be interesting to study this culture more profoundly and compare it with the achievements of other European countries and with the culture of America.

For the outstanding feature of German culture is the fact that it is the exclusive possession of a small class. The culture of other lands is the possession of the whole nation. In England it is handed down the classes feudalwise. Born in the upper classes, which set the standard, it is enthusiastically caught up through snobbism by each class beneath, which gets as near to the standard as possible. As the English are conservative, progress though steady is slow, and the last lines are relatively not so far behind. In France

and Italy their culture is an inherited tradition, as much the birthright of the hairdresser as of the *litterateur*. In Germany, culture is the monopoly of the professional thinking classes—not what we call the professional classes, but a class which has officially adopted thought as a profession. The German intellect is capable of intense thought and unremitting labor, and this small class has attained to a very high state of culture. It is a strange, self-conscious thing, their culture; heavy, laden with accumulated evidence, encyclopaedic, full of curious disproportions. The German savants have a mania for cataloguing, for filing, for reducing the most abstract speculation to scientific form. They are at once clerical and esoteric in their outlook. They acquire all the available knowledge greedily, but they often use it unintelligently, and they have absolutely no humor. Nevertheless, the results of their labor are important and eminently worthy of study.

But just because the thinking class is so small, and so immeasurably in advance of the rest of the population, it has very little influence on the nation's life. This is especially true in that phase of its activities which finds expression in art. This is, moreover, its least admirable phase, for the German genius has always shown itself more philosophic and scientific than aesthetic. The arts, with the obvious exception of music, have not flourished in Germany for centuries. Since the days of German Gothic, Germany's painting has been negligible, and the modern revival has produced singularly uninspired results. The reasons for this are similar

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to the reasons for the comparative failure of the main mass of modern German poetry, and must be attributed partly to the isolated position of the artists, who form a small portion of the thinking class, and partly to the frantic efforts they have been forced to make to produce quickly an art which shall be worthy of the new Germany, both in extent and character. Modern Germany has demanded an art as glittering and imposing as her army, and on the same scale. The artists have felt themselves bound to demonstrate that centuries of artistic achievement count for nothing, and that a systematized effort can create a harvest without seed. The poets have the same duty imposed upon them. They have in fact not only to produce a harvest without seed, but to destroy weeds in plenty before they start. For their tradition is overgrown with sentimentalism, and no conditions could be more unfavorable to fine art than those in which the modern poets in Germany have found themselves.

By modern German poetry, I mean poetry written within the last forty years; that is, within the period synchronising with the consolidation of modern Germany, with the rise of the Krupp factory, the army and the war party, and with Germany's commercial expansion. A poet would be inevitably influenced by this environment. But he would as inevitably be influenced by the poetical tradition of this country. The German tradition in poetry, as in all the arts, has been, as I have said, intensely sentimental, from the days when Walter von der Vogelweide sang:

Unter den linden
An der Heide

[180]

Modern German Poetry

Da unser zweier bette was,
Da muget ir vinden
Schoene beide
Gebrochen bluomen unde gras.
Vor dem walde in einem tal
Tandaradei
Schoene sanc diu nachtegal.

The modern poet can find no vitality in his country's verse until he reaches the lyrics of Heine the Jew. The classical period he finds obsessed with the sentimental melancholy which appeared for centuries the outstanding feature of the national character. It was perhaps partly due to the undeniably melancholy character of the German landscape, or perhaps to a fundamental passivity in the German character when allowed to develop on its own lines freely. However that may be, the modern poet found the German tradition sentimental, and if he was a well-educated young man he was bound to respect it. Here, however, his dilemma began. For he was surrounded by a generation which cast aside the sentimental tradition, and cried out for a new Germany of howitzers and cut prices, and which called for an up-to-date culture to keep pace with it. He was between the devil and the deep, deep sea!

The poets set to work to solve the problem in various ways. Some of them, such as Dehmel, Dauthendey, Hille, George, decided to be good and stick to the tradition, and they won themselves thereby a reputation and perhaps some gold. Others compromised. Their high priest is Liliencron—Detlev Freiherr von Liliencron—who conceived the ingenious plan of writing sentimental verses about soldiers.

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I have not yet struck the poet who wept gently over a falling market, but I doubt not he exists. Others flung in their lot with the modern spirit. They would sing no more of smiling harvests, or of gloomy forests beneath the moon, or of mothers suckling infants at their breast; they would sing of the life in a *Grosse Stadt*, of trams and American bars, and ladies of the demi-monde.

O komm! O komm, Geliebte! In der Bar
Verrät der Mixer den geheimsten Tip.
Und überirdisch, himmlisch steht dein Haar,
Zur Rötlichkeit des Cherry-Brandy-Flip.

Thus sings Ernst Blass in *Der Kondor* (*Eine rigorose Sammlung radikaler Strophen*), which appeared from Heidelberg in 1912, and in which a number of these up-to-date young men published their poems. In a year or two this book will be curiously out of date. Its most ultra-modern flashes will ring as strangely as a man writing today of "the fierce speed of the bicycle." Yet it is worth reading in spite of its vulgarity and its silliness, for here we find some real vitality strangely misapplied, and some experiments in versification, essays in *vers libre*, and attempts at new methods of expression. Take the following, which presents the poet's emotions at three o'clock in the morning:

Böses Stampfen! (Vom Lauschen, vom Warten. . . .)
Grünliches Hämmern, wie in der Chloroform-Narkose!
Ein Pumpwerk zerstösst die Nacht.
Dröhnt.
Mein Herz explodiert.
Die Angst arbeitet rhythmisch, exakt.
Aus einer Röhre, einem Trichter (einer Trompete?)

Modern German Poetry

Fliesst schleimiger Schein:
Das morastgelbe Licht der Welt—meiner Welt.
Der Lichtkegel trifft mein Ohr.
Leider bin ich verdammt, aus diesem schmutzigen Licht Angst
zu pulsen, den Schein in Grauen zu transformieren, in
Sentiments, in Elend-Quartsch.
Das dauert gewiss bis zum Grauen der Dämmerung hinter den
Gardinen.
(O: das gute Angelus-Läuten!
Hirten auf dem Felde,
Kartoffelbauern auf dem Felde Millets!
Liebe Demut ihres gebeugten Rückens!)
. . . Ich bin einer, der nicht in Betracht kommt.
Kein Leben, keine Schminke um mich.
Nur die Angst meine Dame.
(Blicke kratzten, stächen mich,
Ich schrie, stampfte—hautlos ich.)
. . . Nur verschrumpfte Gebete gelingen,
Keine Gebet-Kunstwerke.
Eine Schmach ists, von der Angst erlöst sein zu wollen,
Eine Schmach ists, glücklicher sein zu wollen, als äusserst
unglücklich
Es irritiert die geringste geglückte . . . Harmonie.
. . . Warum nicht das äusserste?
Das isolierte Brennen heiliger Nervenspitzen, letzter Nahrung
des Brandes?
Zuckende Reserven, zügelnd im Dampf, im Krampf.
. . . Übrigens bin ich durchaus im stande, den Ablauf solcher
Empfindungen brüsk zu unterbrechen, "Amerikanismus"
anzuordnen und, mit einer Cigarette, kühnsten Herzens
weiterzulesen in Henri Beyles, *Le Rouge et le Noir*.
Selbstverständlich.
Die Lampe brennt ja noch.

Here we have a daring attempt by Ferdinand Hardekopf.
Its weakness is its exotic character. It is all frankly deriva-
tive, a German copy of a French model. It is Guillaume
Apollinaire dressed up in the Friedrichstrasse, and it has
much of the affected babbling of a blasé youth without

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experience. Moreover there is much in it to sadden us. For we see here traces of another aspect of the poet's dilemma.

Isolation is a dangerous thing for highly strung sensibilities. The violent change in the outlook of the main mass of the German people in the last few generations, the change from the outlook of the traditional poets to the outlook of the Crown Prince and the Handelsbank, has had disastrous results upon personalities too thin-skinned to adapt themselves, and neurosis is today a real danger, destroying the best brains in the country. We find this expressed in the plays of Wedekind, and no class is more affected by it than the *litterateurs*. In *Der Kondor* we have poems which are the expression of minds turned inward upon themselves, revolving in a vicious circle, as much out of touch with the root-springs of life as with modern German civilization. Poor ailing creatures, with pale fingers and sunken cheeks, voicing their obsessions in a café.

But over and above the main body of poets, who have succumbed to the equivocal position of the poet in modern German society, one or two men stand out who have overcome their difficulties. [To be concluded.]

Reginald H. Wilenski

FRENCH POETS AND THE WAR

How many young writers, how many poets, will be cut down by the war in the flower of their life. There has been a good deal of talk of Péguy, killed at the battle of the Marne, where he commanded a company as *officier de*

*réserve*s. He was admired by some and disliked by many. But, after recent events, he would have been destined to a considerable amount of fame, which would have found no opposers. It is one of the saddest things in these great contests between nations that the finest minds are dragged from their work-tables and thrown into the trenches—those minds whose work was desired by humanity like a benediction. I know one man whose life is in danger every day and whose death would leave me inconsolable.

But then, Sophocles was a soldier; Descartes was a soldier. Fate is not always disastrous. And though a man of forty may not have finished his work, he has laid the foundations and indicated its general scheme; everything is not lost for humanity. Much more pitiful are those who die like plants which have just flowered or only budded. Some of us cared for these young men whose deaths have brutally disappointed our hopes, and people ask each other what will remain of the younger generation after the war.

And what will be the spirit of the survivors after these days of danger and heroism? Will they hate or will they respect war? What souls will come through this test? It is perhaps too early to think of such questions, but time, though it passes in horror, passes all the same. It passes on the battle-fields and in peaceful meadows, it hovers on the same wing over dreaming towns and over towns engaged in daily work.

Yes, we may well ask ourselves, what will be the awakening from this nightmare? Economists and statisticians have

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calculated that the wounded world will need about five years in which to recover its health. Perhaps. But others think that the recovery will be quicker and that humanity, still stricken, will be suddenly seized with a furious desire for life. The world will not give itself a respite for convalescence. People will desire to live at any price, and to spend their scarcely recovered powers, while the grass covers the buried bodies. In minds as in the world there will be an unsuspected renewal of strength to which all will submit. Something stronger than death will arouse those who have escaped from death, and they will want to live twice, for themselves and for those who are no more. There will be everywhere a flowering of that plant, now practically abolished in the greater part of Europe—joy.

If it still flowers it is on the battle-fields, for those who hold back do not know it. If there is still gaiety in the world, it is under the shells and in the midst of the shrapnel. The soldiers one meets, who are coming back from the battle, or who have been wounded and healed and are returning, speak of these hours which seem to us so terrible, not indeed as pleasure parties but as hours profoundly moving because they are dangerous. I was listening to one the other day who, after some anecdotes about the life of an advanced out-post, concluded: "But I like it—it is something out of the ordinary." And he was returning to his regiment with an incredible joy.

I know that every soldier is not of so happy a disposition and that more than one is miserable in those murderous

trenches where shells are the only visitors. But these are fewer than one imagines. In war the soldier becomes a fatalist. There are a number of Mohammedans among the allies, but all have become Mohammedans in fatalism and in contempt for danger. A second soul is grafted upon the everyday soul, an extraordinary soul upon the ordinary soul; and man becomes again what civilization has never been able to stamp out—a dangerous being for whom danger does not exist.

But, the peril once passed, he will take up with an inconceivable facility his habits as a civilized man, a man, that is to say, whose efforts are directed toward escaping from pain. I have myself seen, in a provincial hospital, a man wounded in the horrible battle at Charleroi (where there were so many killed that the bed of the Meuse was choked) show terror at the idea of an insignificant operation. This man who could not be held back during the fight and who rushed recklessly upon danger, had to be held down while a bullet was extracted from his arm.

During a battle the imagination has no time to work. A man is suddenly borne into surroundings which absorb and inspire him, while he blanches before a peril which he has had time to consider coldly. The best and happiest soldiers are the men without imagination. It is the same in ordinary life, which is also dangerous sometimes: imagination destroys the power for action.

It is for this reason that at this time I think above all of the poets, of the men of imagination, of the dreamers.

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They also make good soldiers, soldiers for the sake of duty, but they are more deserving of praise than the common people with their coarser brains, who only perceive evil at the moment they feel it themselves.

Remy de Gourmont

Translated by Richard Aldington

NOTE. The first number of the *Bulletin des Écrivains*, 1914-1915, printed privately, which I have just received, tells us that among the French writers who are actively at the front twenty have died on the battle-field, more than thirty have been wounded, and a certain number are in hospitals for illnesses contracted during service.

R. A.

REVIEWS

You and I, by Harriet Monroe. Macmillan.

Miss Monroe, both as editor and as creator, has done so much for the art of poetry, in the several capacities of encouraging beginners and by way of setting a high example in poetical production, that any volume of hers commands attention. *You and I* may continue something of her manner of style as it was shown in the *Columbian Ode*; but it also expresses her sympathy with the feeling of to-day. *The Hotel*, the initial poem in the book, makes one wish that she had given us more free verse. Her catholic attitude toward the revolutionists in verse, the Imagists and Futurists, is not a matter of liberal taste alone; it is a matter of genius for mingling perception and philosophy with a musical skill all her own. We wonder, with this poem before us, why she

has clung so largely to the choral and symphonic effects of her earlier work. It is not a question of her failure to make good use of these forms. But we incline to the belief that in the free measures, and as to certain phases of modern life, her vision would find closer expression, for which opinion *The Hotel* is ample proof. On the other hand, some of Miss Monroe's lyrics of the swifter and intenser sort justify her large adherence to rhyme and the classical methods. *Nancy Hanks* and *The Childless Woman* are among these successes. The music of the latter with its antistrophic movement and impression of double rhyme is unusual indeed:

O mother of that heap of clay, so passive on your breast,
Now do you stare at death, woman, who yesterday were blest?

There is subtlety and a lyric quality in *The Wonder of It* not to be passed over. These things we say with the conviction that the author's artistry, if not the realization of her conceptions, shows at its best in her odes rather than in her lyrics. She seems to require dithyrambic lines and a soft diffusion of color for the complete out-pouring of her gifts. But we predict that her growing realism and the gradual emancipation of her art, here evident, from classical expletives and exclamation, will drive her closer to the living flesh of future subjects, rhyme or no rhyme. Rhyme must give way more and more where it results in spiking a subject about with javelins that do not pierce the heart of the theme.

Anyone who has practiced the art of poetry and mastered its literature measurably as well as Miss Monroe has can well understand the irresistible temptation to treat subjects

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of modern life with something of the majestic form by which the ode is distinguished. Some years ago Kipling essayed to describe a locomotive in the manner of Homer. Our modern machinery, buildings, works of engineering, our cities are truly cyclopean; and Pindaric effects seem at first to give these subjects pictorial and aural expression. They would do so if our modern eyes could see an aeroplane or a ship canal through them. It is a question how nearly a Greek saw an Olympian game through an ode of Pindar, and whether he got an idealization or an ennobled image through the excitation of the imagination, or whether he saw it clearly and abstracted a vital significance from it. The final question is how much has been seen with the inner eye and also how much so seen has been unified into relations of truth and beauty and intelligible significance.

Miss Monroe's poems such as *Night in State Street*, *The Ocean Liner*, *Our Canal*, have varied music and loftiness of conception; but they do not seem to measure up to her sense of realism. Such lines from *The Ocean Liner* as—

Steel hulls impenetrable
To the waves that tease and pull,
Bright engines that answer the beat
Of their foam-slippered dancing feet—

stand out brilliantly against a back-ground of swirling color. And *The Turbine* which is written in iambic pentameter contains these lines:

What is this crystal sphere?
 In my hand it lies
Cold and inert, its puny artery—
That curling cob-web film—ashen and dead.

These quotations show with what precision Miss Monroe can visualize her imaginings. And yet, while confessing that the judgment may not be founded upon principles of art, it seems to us that simple quatrains or free verse would have given us more perfectly what was so clearly before her eyes. It may help out the argument to mention that there are among the accepted classics of English poetic literature more successes in the manner of *The Ode to the West Wind* and *To a Grecian Urn* and *To a Skylark* than in the manner of Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. Again let us quote, this time from *At Twilight*:

The long white lights that glisten
Through Michigan Avenue;
With the red lights down the middle
Where the street shines mirror-wet,
While the rain-strung sky is a fiddle
For the wind to feel and fret.

The fifth line in a flash reproduces one of our Chicago skies, seizing the reality with wonderful truth. There are pictures and music in abundance throughout the book, and a wide variety of subjects treated; there are fugues and simple melodies, and sonnets of power. The double sonnet *Pain* is unforgettable, both for feeling and sound.

E. L. M.

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The Cry of Youth, by Harry Kemp. Kennerley.

Mr. Kemp's voice is rather raw and strident, and not so young as the title of his book would indicate, but now and then it is a poet's voice, singing, to a brass-band accompaniment, of the miseries of the down-and-out and the compensating freedom of the open road. Some of the poems are obvious, others melodramatic, but the best of them are authentic revelations of life, with something of pity and terror in their emotion. Of these the best is *The Ride*, in which the eerie suggestion of companionship of murderer and victim is carried with perfect aplomb to a strong climax.

In such dialect poems as *The Tramp's Confession*, *The Harvest Fly's Complaint*, *Cashing In*, we have flashes of the under-dog's point of view, his vision as well as his pain. And in poems like *Kansas*, *In a Storm*, and *Mount Rainier*—

Snow-garmented, immense,
And holding audience
With subject clouds—

in these we breathe far-blowing western winds.

Such a phrase also as "with star-seas a-wash at thy feet" is a not unworthy tribute to this poet's God. H. M.

My Lady's Book, by Gerald Gould. Kennerley.

Much love poetry comes to this office, presenting all phases of the subject, from tepid amorousness to erotic madness. But not often is the well-worn theme treated with such simplicity and freshness as in this thin little white volume.

Our Contemporaries

Mr. Gould has the singing voice, not powerful but delicate. He attains softly musical cadences and jeweled phrases. Many a lover-poet has ranted about his passion through stormy odes without once convincing us of his emotion. But we do not question the quiet poignancy of the brief poem which begins thus:

My love is fair, she is better than fair to me:
She puts me in mind of a white sea-gull flying over the sea;
She puts me in mind of a dim wind going softly in the grass,
Of things remembered, and young things, and things that shall
 come to pass.

H. M.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

"I am so glad you like to see parts of the *Saturday Transcript*, and it will give me pleasure to send them to you. The editorials are usually bosh; but the paper reflects the tone and mode of thought of a certain part of Boston, and the thirty-six or forty-eight pages do what they can to guide and enlighten the Bostonian. Someone told me the other day of a 'spook' who comes back daily to his old home to read *The Transcript*!"

So writes a member of the older generation to a young relative in the west, happily enclosing a copy of *The Transcript* containing Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite's review of magazine poetry for the year 1914. And having, like the "spook," fallen a victim to the spell of *The Transcript*, I would not presume to criticise a paper which

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affords Mr. Braithwaite this generous opportunity to enlighten Bostonians on the subject of modern poetry. Indeed, we can only regret that other papers do not afford other critics and other communities an equal opportunity. If they did, there would be more chance for a liberal congress of opinion; and there would be greater publicity for the poets, who need publicity in order that their art may be shared, not by Bostonians alone, but by their contemporaries in each centre of this nation's ninety-nine million inhabitants. One poet to a million is not too much to expect, but is there any single poet in the United States (unless it be Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, with the combined circulation of the Hearst newspapers) who has a million readers? Are there, all told, a million readers of contemporary poetry in the United States? I believe there are, but their interest is sporadic and unorganized, and it is for this reason that one must applaud Mr. Braithwaite's valiant attempt to effect a co-ordination of interest between poets and readers, even though one may disagree radically with his standards of selection.

Mr. Braithwaite has subjected six hundred and forty-seven poems to an "impartial test," and out of this number one hundred and fifty-seven emerge as "poems of distinction," and thirty of these are given particularly honorable mention. We believe that the gentleman's intention is just, and that he honestly believes that his test is impartial. But all judgment is human, and Mr. Braithwaite's judgment remains Mr. Braithwaite's. Every prisoner has a right to a jury,

and every poet is a prisoner until he is given the liberty of recognition. If Mr. Braithwaite were multiplied by twelve other critics performing a like service in other newspapers, it is possible that there might not be so many sins of omission and commission. Why Mr. Braithwaite chooses just the seven magazines that he does, to stand as monumentally as the churches of Asia, is not quite clear. It is incredible that the *Atlantic Monthly* should have so fallen from grace as not to be included in this list; or why there should be this limit at all we do not quite understand. POETRY fares as well as the *Atlantic*, for two poems have been singled out from each. But the St. Louis *Mirror* gets no mention at all, and thus Mr. Edgar Lee Masters' fine *Spoon River Anthology*, from which we quoted in our November number—one of the year's most important achievements—passes unnoticed.

Will the newspaper editors of the Middle West please copy?
A. C. H.

THE DEATH OF MADISON CAWEIN

The death of Madison Cawein, which occurred on the eighth of December in Louisville, is a deep grief to his many friends and admirers.

Born at Louisville in 1865, he was still a young man when Mr. Howells' warm greeting of his first book of verse gave him an authoritative introduction to American

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readers. Since then he has published many small volumes, which were united in 1907 in his *Complete Poetical Works* (5 vols.). Three years later Mr. Howells reaffirmed his early praise of the poet in an introduction to a volume of selections. (Publishers, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.)

This is not the moment to attempt a critical review of Madison Cawein's work. Many of his poems have been much quoted and dearly loved, and time, no doubt, will select a few for permanent honor in the anthologies of American song. Meantime we can only regret his too early death, and recall the gracious charm, the fine gentleness, of his character.

POETRY is fortunate in being able to offer to its readers one of his most recent poems.

NOTES

The poets represented in the present number are, with two exceptions, Americans. The first exception is M. Remy de Gourmont, one of the most prominent French poets of the younger school. The other, Mrs. Herman Scheffauer, author, with Mr. Stephen Swift, of *London Windows*, has perhaps become our fellow-citizen through her recent marriage with the well-known American poet.

Miss Edith Wyatt, of Chicago, writer of novels and critical articles, has contributed verse to various magazines. Some of her western and city poems have had a wide appeal.

Miss Zoë Akins, of Saint Louis, published in 1912 *A Book of First Poems* (Grant Richards, London, and Kennerley, New York).

Mr. Lee Wilson Dodd, of New Haven, Conn., is the author of a book of poems, *The Modern Alchemist* (Badger), and of a number of plays for the stage.

Of the more recent poets represented, Miss Miriam Allen de Ford, of Boston, is a young journalist and magazine writer; Alice Ormond Campbell (Mrs. James C.), of New York, was well known a few years ago as a precocious child poet to readers of the *Atlanta Constitution*; Frances Gregg (Mrs. Louis Wilkinson) is a young American imagist married to an Englishman; Mr. Hall Roffey is a young American also living abroad; and Mr. Patrick Orr is a Californian.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Enchanted Tulips and Other Verses for Children, by A., E., and M. Keary. Macmillan.

And Then Came Spring, by Juliane Paulsen. Gorham Press.

Some Textual Difficulties in Shakespeare, by Charles D. Stewart. Yale University Press.

The Songs of Aengus, by Robard Emmet Ua Cinneidig. Privately Printed.

Songs from the Smoke, by Madeleine Sweeny Miller. Methodist Book Concern, New York.

The Teacher's Day and Other Poems, by John Nickal. Longmans, Green & Co., London.

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- The School Door*, by John Nickal. Longmans, Green & Co.
Fra Angelico and Other Lyrics, by I. Gregory Smith. Longmans, Green & Co.
Reincarnated, by Charles Gould Beede. Privately Printed.
Songs of the Outlands, by Henry Herbert Knibbs. Houghton-Mifflin Co.
Something Beyond and Other Poems, by John Gaylord Davenport. Gorham Press.
Barricades, Lyrics and Sonnets, by Louis How. Sherman, French & Co.
Flood Tide and Other Poems, by Carolyn Elizabeth Haynes. Gorham Press.
Sunlight and Shadow, by Louis W. Kneeland. Sherman, French & Co.
Freedom, by Geoffrey Winthrop Young. Smith, Elder & Co., London.
The Present Hour, by Percy Mackaye. Macmillan.
Makers of Madness, a Play, by Hermann Hagedorn. Macmillan.
Earth Deities and Other Rhythmic Masques, by Bliss Carman and Mary Perry King. Kennerley.
The Rainbow Chaser and Other Poems, by Kenneth Rand. Sherman, French & Co.
A Caravel of Dreams, by Lila Munro Tainter. Sherman, French & Co.
The Man Sings, by Roscoe Gilmore Stott. Stewart & Kidd Co., Cincinnati.
Remember Louvain, A Little Book of Liberty and War, Selected by E. V. Lucas. Methuen & Co., London.
Phantasies, by Nanna Matthews Bryant. Gorham Press.
Literature and Insurgency, by John Curtis Underwood. Kennerley.
Children of Love, by Harold Monro. Poetry Bookshop, London.
Sing-Songs of the War, by Maurice Hewlett. Poetry Bookshop, London.

SCRIBNER BOOKS

The Grand Canyon and Other Poems

By Henry van Dyke

This collection of Dr. van Dyke's recent verse takes its title from that impressive description of the Grand Canyon of Arizona at daybreak, which stands among the most beautiful of Dr. van Dyke's poems. The rest of the collection is characterized by those rare qualities that, as *The Outlook* has said, have enabled the author "to win the suffrage of the few as well as the applause of the many." \$1.25 net; postage extra.

The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe

With an Introduction by E. C. STEDMAN and Notes by Professor G. E. WOODBERRY.

Nearly half a century passed since the death of Poe before the appearance of the Stedman-Woodberry edition of his works, which embodied in its editorial departments critical scholarship of the highest class. In this volume of Poe's "Poems" the introduction and the notes treat not only of the more significant aspects of Poe's genius as a poet, but of his technical methods, and of scores of bibliographical and personal matters suggested by his verses. While the first of this volume is the same as that of the Stedman-Woodberry Edition the book has been entirely reset in larger type. Half-morocco, \$4.00 net; half calf, \$3.50 net; cloth, with portrait, \$2.00 net.

The Path-Flower and Other Verses

By Olive T. Dargan

"Her vocabulary is varied, flowing, expressive. Indubitably a poet of great charm and power has appeared in the person of Olive Tilford Dargan."
—JAMES HUNEKER, in the *North American Review*.
\$1.25 net; postage extra.

One Woman to Another and Other Poems

By Corine Roosevelt Robinson

"Mrs. Robinson has a gift of poetic thought and expression and an ear for the music of poetry which rarely permits a discordant line, but it is this constant impression of deep sincerity which is her most appealing and distinguishing quality." —*Springfield Republican*.
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The Poems of Edward Sanford Martin

In this complete collection is the varied and charming product of his muse in all her moods, grave and arch, serious and tender. No one has a lighter touch gracing more thoughtful substance whether in verse or prose, and Mr. Martin's characteristic qualities are here abundantly illustrated in "occasional" poems worthy of Dr. Holmes and ballads that suggest Thackeray.
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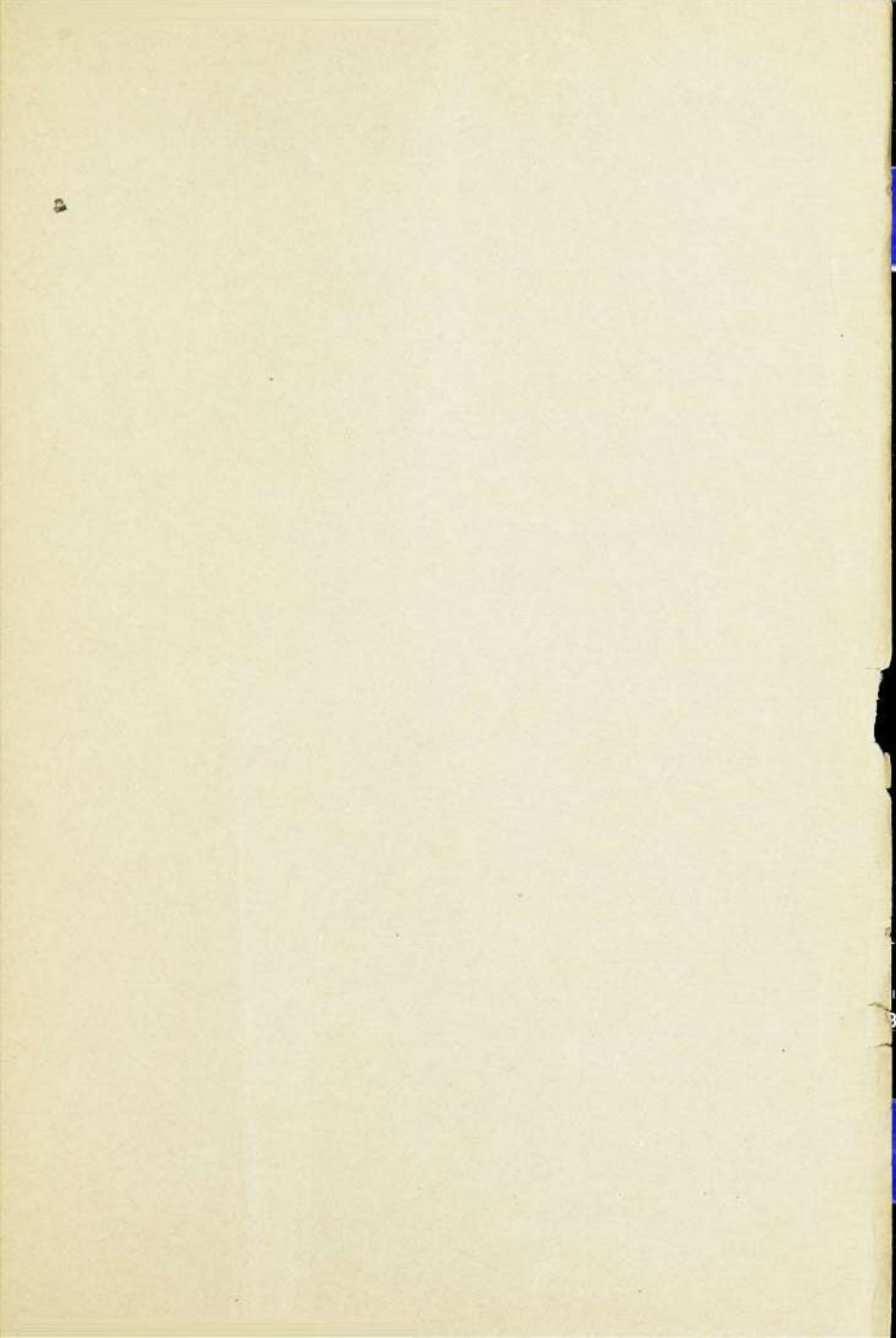
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FEBRUARY, 1915

THE CHINESE NIGHTINGALE

A Song in Chinese Tapestries

Dedicated to S. T. F.

“OW, how,” he said. “Friend Chang,” I said,
“San Francisco sleeps as the dead—
Ended license, lust and play:
Why do you iron the night away?
Your big clock speaks with a deadly sound,
With a tick and a wail till dawn comes round.
While the monster shadows glower and creep,
What can be better for man than sleep?”

“I will tell you a secret,” Chang replied;
“My breast with vision is satisfied,
And I see green trees and fluttering wings,
And my deathless bird from Shanghai sings.”

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Then he lit five fire-crackers in a pan.
"Pop, pop!" said the fire-crackers, "cra-cra-crack!"
He lit a joss-stick long and black.
Then the proud gray joss in the corner stirred;
On his wrist appeared a gray small bird,
And this was the song of the gray small bird:

"Where is the princess, loved forever,
Who made Chang first of the kings of men?"

And the joss in the corner stirred again;
And the carved dog, curled in his arms, awoke,
Barked forth a smoke-cloud that whirled and broke.
It piled in a maze round the ironing-place,
And there on the snowy table wide
Stood a Chinese lady of high degree,
With a scornful, witching, tea-rose face . . .
Yet she put away all form and pride,
And laid her glimmering veil aside
With a childlike smile for Chang and for me.

The walls fell back, night was aflower,
The table gleamed in a moonlit bower,
While Chang, with a countenance carved of stone,
Ironed and ironed, all alone.
And thus she sang to the busy man Chang:

The Chinese Nightingale

"Have you forgotten
Deep in the ages, long, long ago,
I was your sweetheart, there on the sand—
Storm-worn beach of the Chinese land?
We sold our grain in the peacock town
Built on the edge of the sea-sands brown—
Built on the edge of the sea-sands brown . . .

"When all the world was drinking blood
From the skulls of men and bulls,
And all the world had swords and clubs of stone,
We drank our tea in China, beneath the sacred spice-trees,
And heard the curled waves of the harbor moan.
And this gray bird, in Love's first spring,
With a bright-bronze breast and a bronze-brown wing,
Captured the world with his carolling.
Do you remember, ages after,
At last the world we were born to own?
You were the heir of the yellow throne—
The world was the field of the Chinese man
And we were the pride of the sons of Han.
We copied deep books, and we carved in jade,
And wove white silks in the mulberry shade." . . .

"I remember, I remember
That Spring came on forever,
That Spring came on forever."
Said the Chinese nightingale.

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My heart was filled with marvel and dream
Though I saw the western street-lamps gleam,
Though dawn was bringing the western day,
Though Chang was a laundryman, ironing away
Mingled there, with the streets and alleys,
The railroad-yard, and the clock-tower bright,
Demon-clouds crossed ancient valleys;
Across wide lotos-ponds of light
I marked a giant firefly's flight.

And the lady, rosy-red,
Opened her fan, closed her fan,
Stretched her hand toward Chang, and said:
"Do you remember,
Ages after,
Our palace of heart-red stone?
Do you remember
The little doll-faced children
With their lanterns full of moon-fire,
That came from all the empire
Honoring the throne?—
The loveliest fête and carnival
Our world had ever known?
The sages sat about us
With their heads bowed in their beards,
With proper meditation on the sight.
Confucius was not born;
We lived in those great days

The Chinese Nightingale

Confucius later said were lived aright
And this gray bird, on that day of spring,
With a bright-bronze breast and a bronze-brown wing,
Captured the world with his carolling.
Late at night his tune was spent.
Peasants,
Sages,
Children,
Homeward went,
And then the bronze bird sang for you and me.
We walked alone, our hearts were high and free.
I had a silvery name, I had a silvery name,
I had a silvery name—do you remember
The name you cried beside the tumbling sea?"

Chang turned not to the lady slim—
He bent to his work, ironing away;
But she was arch and knowing and glowing.
And the bird on his shoulder spoke for him.

"Darling . . . darling . . . darling . . . darling . . ."
Said the Chinese nightingale.

.

The great gray joss on a rustic shelf,
Rakish and shrewd, with his collar awry,
Sang impolitely, as though by himself,
Drowning with his bellowing the nightingale's cry:

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"Back through a hundred, hundred years
Hear the waves as they climb the piers,
Hear the howl of the silver seas,
Hear the thunder!
Hear the gongs of holy China
How the waves and tunes combine
In a rhythmic clashing wonder,
Incantation old and fine:
 'Dragons, dragons, Chinese dragons;
 Red fire-crackers, and green fire-crackers,
 And dragons, dragons, Chinese dragons.' "

Then the lady, rosy-red,
Turned to her lover Chang and said:
"Dare you forget that turquoise dawn
When we stood on our mist-hung velvet lawn,
And worked a spell this great joss taught
Till a God of the Dragons was charmed and caught?
From the flag high over our palace-home
He flew to our feet in rainbow-foam—
A king of beauty and tempest and thunder
Panting to tear our sorrows asunder,
A dragon of fair adventure and wonder.
We mounted the back of that royal slave
With thoughts of desire that were noble and grave.
We swam down the shore to the dragon-mountains,
We whirled to the peaks and the fiery fountains.
To our secret ivory house we were borne.

The Chinese Nightingale

We looked down the wonderful wing-filled regions
Where the dragons darted in glimmering legions.
Right by my breast the nightingale sang;
The old rhymes rang in the sunlit mist
That we this hour regain—
Song-fire for the brain.
When my hands and my hair and my feet you kissed,
When you cried for your heart's new pain,
What was my name in the dragon-mist,
In the rings of rainbowed rain?"

"Sorrow and love, glory and love,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.
"Sorrow and love, glory and love,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.

And now the joss broke in with his song:
"Dying ember, bird of Chang,
Soul of Chang, do you remember?—
Ere you returned to the shining harbor
There were pirates by ten thousand
Descended on the town
In vessels mountain-high and red and brown,
Moon-ships that climbed the storms and cut the skies.
On their prows were painted terrible bright eyes.
But I was then a wizard and a scholar and a priest;
I stood upon the sand;
With lifted hand I looked upon them

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And sunk their vessels with my wizard eyes,
And the stately lacquer-gate made safe again.
Deep, deep below the bay, the sea-weed and the spray,
Embalmed in amber every pirate lies,
Embalmed in amber every pirate lies."

Then this did the noble lady say:
"Bird, do you dream of our home-coming day
When you flew like a courier on before
From the dragon-peak to our palace-door,
And we drove the steed in your singing path—
The ramping dragon of laughter and wrath;
And found our city all aglow,
And knighted this joss that decked it so?
There were golden fishes in the purple river
And silver fishes and rainbow fishes.
There were golden junks in the laughing river,
And silver junks and rainbow junks:
There were golden lilies by the bay and river,
And silver lilies and tiger-lilies,
And tinkling wind-bells in the gardens of the town
By the black-lacquer-gate
Where walked in state
The kind king Chang
And his sweet-heart mate
With his flag-born dragon
And his crown of pearl and jade;
And his nightingale reigning in the mulberry shade,

The Chinese Nightingale

And sailors and soldiers on the sea-sands brown,
And priests who bowed them down to your song—
By the city called Han, the peacock town,
By the city called Han, the nightingale town,
The nightingale town."

Then sang the bird, so strangely gay,
Fluttering, fluttering, ghostly and gray,
A vague, unravelling, answering tune,
Like a long unwinding silk cocoon;
Sang as though for the soul of him
Who ironed away in that bower dim:

"I have forgotten
Your dragons great,
Merry and mad and friendly and bold.
Dim is your proud lost palace-gate.
I vaguely know
There were heroes of old,
Troubles more than the heart could hold,
There were wolves in the woods
Yet lambs in the fold,
Nests in the top of the almond tree . . .
The evergreen tree . . . and the mulberry tree
Life and hurry and joy forgotten,
Years on years I but half-remember . . .
Man is a torch, then ashes soon,
May and June, then dead December,
Dead December, then again June.

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Who shall end my dream's confusion?
Life is a loom, weaving illusion
I remember, I remember
There were ghostly veils and laces . . .
In the shadowy, bowery places . . .
With lovers' ardent faces
Bending to one another,
Speaking each his part.
They infinitely echo
In the red cave of my heart.
'Sweetheart, sweetheart, sweetheart!'
They said to one another.
They spoke, I think, of perils past.
They spoke, I think, of peace at last.
One thing I remember:
Spring came on forever,
Spring came on forever,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.

Vachel Lindsay

SILENCE

I have known the silence of the stars and of the sea,
And the silence of the city when it pauses,
And the silence of a man and a maid,
And the silence of the sick
When their eyes roam about the room.
And I ask: For the depths
Of what use is language?
A beast of the field moans a few times
When death takes its young.
And we are voiceless in the presence of realities—
We cannot speak.

A curious boy asks an old soldier
Sitting in front of the grocery store,
"How did you lose your leg?"
And the old soldier is struck with silence,
Or his mind flies away
Because he cannot concentrate it on Gettysburg.
It comes back jocosely
And he says, "A bear bit it off."
And the boy wonders, while the old soldier
Dumbly, feebly lives over
The flashes of guns, the thunder of cannon,
The shrieks of the slain,
And himself lying on the ground,

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And the hospital surgeons, the knives,
And the long days in bed.
But if he could describe it all
He would be an artist.
But if he were an artist there would be deeper wounds
Which he could not describe.

There is the silence of a great hatred,
And the silence of a great love,
And the silence of an embittered friendship.
There is the silence of a spiritual crisis,
Through which your soul, exquisitely tortured,
Comes with visions not to be uttered
Into a realm of higher life.
There is the silence of defeat.
There is the silence of those unjustly punished;
And the silence of the dying whose hand
Suddenly grips yours.
There is the silence between father and son,
When the father cannot explain his life,
Even though he be misunderstood for it.

There is the silence that comes between husband and wife.
There is the silence of those who have failed;
And the vast silence that covers
Broken nations and vanquished leaders.
There is the silence of Lincoln,
Thinking of the poverty of his youth.

Silence

And the silence of Napoleon
After Waterloo.
And the silence of Jeanne d' Arc
Saying amid the flames, "Blessed Jesus"—
Revealing in two words all sorrow, all hope.
And there is the silence of age,
Too full of wisdom for the tongue to utter it
In words intelligible to those who have not lived
The great range of life.

And there is the silence of the dead.
If we who are in life cannot speak
Of profound experiences,
Why do you marvel that the dead
Do not tell you of death?
Their silence shall be interpreted
As we approach them.

Edgar Lee Masters

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THE IDLER

When he passed him by
Where the maids were spinning,
They would drop their work and sigh,
Deem him worth the winning.
Where he wandered they would follow,
Where the river reeds were hollow,
Dancing to his tabor.
But the old dames laughed at him,
Gibed at him and scoffed at him,
Called him idle neighbor;
And the maids, they blamed them all,
Mocked them all and shamed them all,
Bade them get to labor.

When he roamed along
Where the lads were sheaving,
They would heed his happy song,
And, their sickles leaving,
Follow him, the mad-eyed rover,
Through the daisies and the clover
Where the bees were lurking.
But the farmers hated him,
Bruised and mauled and baited him,
Damned him for his shirking.

And the lads, they flouted them,
Cursed and cuffed and clouted them,
Drove them to their working.

Now he lieth low:

Where the trees are waving
And the breezes softest blow,
There he hath his graving.
All the maidens sob and sorrow
For their love who knows no morrow,
And the lads are grieving.
All the birds sing sad of him;
The old folk are glad of him,
Curse his sweet deceiving,
Cry, "Well rid of him, God wot!"—
But their eyes grow dim, God wot,
Harvesting and weaving.

THE POET

He sings of loves and tears to him denied,
Of aspirations that he never knew.
He is earth's mountebank and prophet too,
And of men's sorrows he is crucified.

Victor Starbuck

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THE FISHER LAD

The sky is all of a change now, and over the sea there is red,
And swift as the wind the darkness has taken to wings and
fled

To the far side of the round world where lovers are gladly
waiting

For the soft breath of the night time to wander away to the
mating.

The sky is all of a change now, in amber and red and gold,
And a clean, fresh day is dawning for all of the fisher fold;
And the white sail of my small ship is alive to the wind's
wild pleading,

And the soft lap of the stirred sea is a sound in my heart song
breeding.

The sky is all of a change now, and out on the tossing sea
I'll lay my course for the vineyard God made for the likes
of me;

And the soft breath of the night time will find me treasure
laden,

With a light step and a clean hand and a song for a fisher
maiden.

Francis Buzzell

VOICES OF WOMEN

A LOST FRIEND

I wish there could have been—
Strong, loyal, innocent —
But one hour long ago,
The you I thought to be.

High watch on things unseen,
Grave honor, pure intent—
The soul I thought to know
Gave all these things to me.

I could have made a grave
For that immortal hour,
For that immortal friend,
Still through my whole life mine.

Purple and gold would wave
Thought-flower, passion-flower,
Above it, to the end
Comforting-place and shrine.

But where your image stood
Oh, there was never you!
(My heart, whence it is gone,
Feels a tired, empty pain).

You were a dream, a mood,
Dim, wavering, untrue;
A ghost that passed at dawn
And will not come again.

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THE NET

The strangers' children laugh along the street:
They know not, or forget,
The sweeping of the net
Flung to ensnare such little careless feet.

And we—we smile and watch them pass along,
With those who walk beside,
Soft-smiling, cruel-eyed:
We guard our own—not ours to right the wrong.

We do not care—we shall not heed or mark
Till we shall hear one day,
Too late to strive or pray,
Our daughters' voices crying from the dark.

THE SINGER AT THE GATE

Must I always sing at the gate to hearten the men who fight
For causes changeful as wind and as brief as the summer
night?

Must I always herald the wisdom of Man who is blind,
blind-led,
Of kings who rule for an hour and die when the hour is dead ;

The Singer at the Gate

Of right that is wrong tomorrow, of truths that were last
year's lies,
Of little strifes and upbuildings that die when a nation dies?

For all Assyria's captains are dead with the dead they made,
Dust of the gyve and anklet with dust of the casque and
blade;

But wonderful dreams blow still in the swirl of a smoke
new-gone,
As they blew from a fire at dusk for my brother in Ascalon.

And Rome is withered, and Hellas; but leaves in the wind
bow still,
As they bowed for my brother's dreaming who sang by some
dead god's hill:

For all of the mighty walls men have built to sweep down
again
Are shadows of visions spun by some poet far from men.

I am tired of praising the deeds that are brief as a wind may
be,
That change with the mocking turn of a year or a century:

I go to spin dreams in dark, that shall last until men are
hurled
Out into the space of the Timeless with ash of a burning
world!

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THE LAST SONG OF BILITIS

Under dusky laurel leaf,
Scarlet leaf of rose,
I lie prone, who have known
All a woman knows.

Love and grief and motherhood,
Fame and mirth and scorn,
These are all shall befall
Any woman born.

Jewel-laden are my hands,
Tall my stone above—
Do not weep that I sleep,
Who was wise in love.

Where I walk, a shadow gray
Through gray asphodel,
I am glad, who have had
All that life can tell.

Margaret Widdemer

A CALL IN HELL

I have my best clothes on ;
A card case in my hand,
And pain in my heart.

Some one, before I started
Out from the happy home,
Kissed me
On the unhappy eyes with his unhappy mouth,
And said, "Go out—have cheer—and see your friends."
The world goes on although we burn in hell.

Across the rutty roads that lie in ridges,
Striped and barred like the back of a beaten woman,
Past windows blinded with lace—
So one shall not look in
On five, ten, or a dozen covert lives
Like his, like mine, like ours—
For all we do the best we can
Under the complicated curse.

Past blighted corners of streets,
Where the winds of loneliness take me and twist me
Like a rag sodden with tears,
Forcing me to the shelter of strong houses
Where at least a door will open if I ring. . . .

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I hope no one will be in
For if they are kind to me I shall cry.

The door opens on Chinoiseries.
The mild white maid with many frills
Stands expectant.

There are curtains at her back
Hot and red—no gray.
It is the East in Cromwell Road,
The East where man is polygamous
And without reproach.

They were in and not too kind. . . .
The kettle hissed and I drank;
Then a parrot shrieked and I fled.

And I am back in the street.
Stranded.
There are miles and miles of paving stones
Rectangular, with round bosses for the coal cellars.
They converge to a vanishing point
Before they turn and hit me. . . .
There is a cab, and home!
Home? What home?
The streets are kinder.

Violet Hunt

DANCERS

PALACE MUSIC HALL—(*Les Sylphides*)

To Nijinsky

The little white lambs frisk
And flirt their woolen panties;
In meek and sleek sweet patterns
They group about their shepherd.

Hola!
An elegant shepherd!

He trips like a young princess;
He has curls like a real Madonna.
And there he goes prancing
And dancing, and entrancing
A little pastoral lady.

But perhaps he is really a Panisk,
Running through tall white flowers
After a white mademoiselle butterfly.

He does not do it for money
As they other here have done;

He likes to jump and feel his legs.

And after all I think he is a fairy prince,
And the dance means that he has lost his kingdom
But that he will marry a king's daughter.

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INTERLUDE

Blow your tin squeals
On your reedy whistle.

How they come
 dancing,
White girls,
 lithe girls
In linked dance
From Attica!
Gay girls dancing
 in the frozen street,
Hair streaming, and white raiment
Flying,
Red lips that first were
Red in Ephesus.

Gone!
You—red-nose, piping by the Red Lion,
You?
You brought them!
Here, take my pennies,
"*Mon semblable, mon frère!*"

Richard Aldington

SISTER OF THE ROSE

When I love thee, O Beloved, it is with joy,
And laughter and song and sun;
And when I leave thee, O Beloved,
Thou art not away . . .
For I am gathering cherries in the tree-tops of thy meditation

Thou art always with me, O Beloved, in terror and peace,
For thou sweetest through me like a great wind;
And thou leavest no dust behind nor anything foreign,
But pathways, pathways!—
That thy thoughts have followed.

I care not whether it be up or down, the way I go with thee,
For always it has a flower in the grass,
And a tree overhead;
And the stream of thy laughter flows ever along . . .
Oh, the slope of thy bosom is covered with clover in the
morning!

Give me thy great flowers, O Beloved,
That open boldly to the moon!
And the strong sweep of the flood
Thou hidest in the ravines of thy sleep!

Thou art a daughter of the lightning,
And a sister of the rose;
Thy kisses are as keen as the grass at midnight,
And thy tenderness a bowl of new milk.

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THE RAIN

My heart is a thread of silver in the rain,
And I am dissolved upon the roads;
My heart is a rock upon a hill,
And I glimmer like white boards.

The stars are waiting in a hedge,
And upon the grass are shining sentinels;
And the dusk that follows the rain is as a mother to her
children,

Who weareth smooth the scars with her caresses,
And to her moderation subdues the sharp speech.

The hills have risen in a colored coat,
And the oak split to its root laughs at Heaven.
The fields are dimpled like a young infant,
And the brass bowl of the sun drips honey—
The fields are open like a flaming poppy,
And the sun blooms like a rose.

Feet sound upon the road. Oh, the good sound of feet upon
the roads!
O my heart!
Have you drunk your fill of the rain for nothing?

THE BATTLE OF MEN AND GOD

From age to age the spirits wage
Their endless strife with God,
The spirits that are brave and strong
And will not stoop nor plod.

From age to age the spirits lose,
For God lifts high his Hell
And strikes their struggling hands to earth
And scatters them pellmell.

Men have but two hands and a brain
And wills that often veer;
God stands upon the topmost plain
And wields the sword of fear.

God owns the cops and mighty shops
And drives the motor cars;
But hungry men still mock his power
As deserts mock the stars.

From age to age do stricken men,
Who yet shirk not to be,
Withstand the onslaughts of their God
As rocks withstand the sea.

THE HAUNT

When night comes I fold my wings,
I must sleep.
When night comes I do not wake
And do not weep.

I drop down like dust that falls
By the roads,
Where with green irreverent feet
Pass the toads.

When night comes the phantoms rise—
Fear and Lust;
Over me they pass like toads
In the dust.

When night comes I call no bride
To my bed,
Fearful lest I give men life
Who are dead!

Orrick Johns

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

THE RENAISSANCE

"All criticism is an attempt to define the classic."

I—THE PALETTE

No one wants the native American poet to be *au courant* with the literary affairs of Paris and London in order that he may make imitations of Paris and London models, but precisely in order that he shall not waste his lifetime making unconscious, or semi-conscious, imitations of French and English models thirty or forty or an hundred years old.

Chaucer is better than Crestien de Troyes, and the Elizabethan playwrights are more interesting than the Pléiade, because they went beyond their models.

The value of a capital or metropolis is that if a man in a capital cribs, quotes or imitates, someone else immediately lets the cat out of the bag and says what he is cribbing, quoting or imitating.

America has as yet no capital. The study of "comparative literature" received that label about eighty years ago. It has existed for at least two thousand years. The best Latin poets knew Greek. The troubadours knew several jargons. Dante wrote in Italian, Latin and Provençal, and knew presumably other tongues, including a possible smattering of Hebrew.

I once met a very ancient Oxford "head," and in the middle of dinner he turned to me, saying: "Ah—um, ah—poet. Ah, some one showed me a new poem the other day, the—ah—the *Hownd of Heaven*."

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I said, "Well, what did you think of it?" and he answered, "Couldn't be bothered to stop for every adjective!"

That enlightened opinion was based on a form of comparative literature called "the classic education."

The first step of a renaissance, or awakening, is the importation of models for painting, sculpture or writing. We have had many "movements," movements stimulated by "comparison." Flaminio and Amaltheus and the latinists of the quattrocento and cinquecento began a movement for enrichment which culminated in the Elizabethan stage, and which produced the French Pléiade. There was wastage and servile imitation. The first effect of the Greek learning was possibly bad. There was a deal of verbalism. We find the decadence of this movement in Tasso and Ariosto and Milton.

The romantic awakening dates from the production of *Ossian*. The last century rediscovered the middle ages. It is possible that this century may find a new Greece in China. In the meantime we have come upon a new table of values. I can only compare this endeavor of criticism to the contemporary search for pure color in painting. We have come to some recognition of the fact that poets like Villon, Sappho and Catullus differ from poets like Milton, Tasso and Camoens, and that size is no more a criterion of writing than it is of painting.

I suppose no two men will agree absolutely respecting "pure color" or "good color," but the modern painter recognizes the importance of the palette. One can but make out one's own spectrum or table. Let us choose: Homer, Sappho,

Ibycus, Theocritus' idyl of the woman spinning with charmed wheel; Catullus, especially the *Collis O Heliconii*. Not Virgil, especially not the *Æneid*, where he has no story worth telling, no sense of personality. His hero is a stick who would have contributed to *The New Statesman*. He has a nice verbalism. Dante was right to respect him, for Dante had no Greek, and the *Æneid* would have stood out nobly against such literature as was available in the year 1300.

I should wish, for myself at least, a few *sirventes* of Bertran de Born, and a few strophes of Arnaut Daniel, though one might learn from Dante himself all that one could learn from Arnaut: precision of statement, particularization. Still there is no tongue like the Provençal wherein to study the subsidiary arts of rhyme and rhyme-blending.

I should want also some further mediæval song-book, containing a few more troubadour poems, especially one or two by Vidal and Marueil, six poems of Guido's, German songs out of Will Vesper's song book, and especially some by Walter von der Vogelweide.

I should want Dante of course, and the *Poema del Cid*, and the *Sea-farer* and one passage out of *The Wanderer*. In fact, some knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon fragments—not particularly the Beowulf—would prevent a man's sinking into contentment with a lot of wish-wash that passes for classic or "standard" poetry.

So far as the palette of sheer color is concerned, one could, at a pinch, do without nearly all the French poets save

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Villon. If a man knew Villon and the *Sea-farer* and Dante, and that one scrap of Ibycus, he would, I think, never be able to be content with a sort of pretentious and decorated verse which receives praise from those who have been instructed to like it, or with a certain sort of formal verbalism which is supposed to be good writing by those who have never read any French prose.

What one learns from other French poets, one might as readily learn from Voltaire and Stendhal and Flaubert. One is a fool, of course, if one forego the pleasure of Gautier, and Corbière and the *Pléïade*, but whether reading them will more discontent you with bad writing than would the reading of Mérimée, I do not know.

A sound poetic training is nothing more than the science of being discontented.

After Villon, the next poet for an absolutely clear palette, is Heine. It takes only a small amount of reading to disgust one, not with English poets, but with English standards. I can not make it too clear that this is not a destructive article. Let anyone drink any sort of liqueur that suits him. Let him enjoy the aroma as a unity, let him forget all that he has heard of technic, but let him not confuse enjoyment with criticism, constructive criticism, or preparation for writing. There is nothing like futurist abolition of past glories in this brief article. It does not preclude an enjoyment of Charles d'Orleans or Mark Alexander Boyd. "Fra bank to bank, fra wood to wood I rin."

Since Lamb and his contemporary critics everything has been based, and absurdly based, on the Elizabethans, who are

a pastiche. They are "neither very intense nor very accomplished." (I leave Shakespeare out of this discussion and also the Greek dramatists.) Or let us say that Keats very probably made the last profitable rehash of Elizabethanism. Or let us query the use of a twentieth century poet's trying to dig up what Sidney himself called "Petrarch's long deceased woes."

Chaucer should be on every man's shelf. Milton is the worst sort of poison. He is a thorough-going decadent in the worst sense of the term. If he had stopped after writing the short poems one might respect him. The definite contribution in his later work consists in his developing the sonority of the English blank-verse paragraph. If poetry consisted in derivation from the Greek anthology one could not much improve on Drummond or Hawthornden's *Phoebus, Arise*. Milton is certainly no better than Drummond. He makes his pastiche out of more people. He is bombast, of perhaps a very high order, but he is the worst possible food for a growing poet, save possibly Francis Thompson and Tasso.

Goethe is perhaps the only one of the poets who tried to be colossi unsuccessfully, who does not breed noxious contentments. His lyrics are so fine, so unapproachable—I mean they are as good as Heine's and Von der Vogelweide's—but outside his lyrics he never comes off his perch. We are tired of men upon perches.

Virgil is a man on a perch. All these writers of pseudo *épopée* are people on perches. Homer and the author of the *Poema del Cid* are keen on their stories. Milton and Virgil

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are concerned with decorations and trappings, and they muck about with a moral. Dante is concerned with a *senso morale*, which is a totally different matter. He breeds discontentments. Milton does not breed discontentments, he only sets the neophyte trying to pile up noise and adjectives, as in these lines:

Thus th' ichthyosaurus was dubbed combative . . .
Captive he led with him Geography . . .
Whom to encompass in th' exiguous bonds . . .

There is no end to this leonine ramping.

It is possible that only Cavalcanti and Leopardi can lift rhetoric into the realm of poetry. With them one never knows the border line. In Leopardi there is such sincerity, such fire of sombre pessimism, that one can not carp or much question his manner. I do not mean that one should copy the great poets whom I have named above—one does not copy colors on a palette. There is a difference between what one enjoys and what one takes as proof color.

I dare say it is, in this century, inexplicable how or why a man should try to hold up a standard of excellence to which he himself can not constantly attain. An acquaintance of mine deliberately says that mediocre poetry is worth writing. If mediocrities want immortality they must of course keep up some sort of cult of mediocrity; they must develop the habit of preserving Lewis Morris and Co.

The same crime is perpetrated in American schools by courses in "American literature." You might as well give

courses in "American chemistry," neglecting all foreign discoveries. This is not patriotism.

No American poetry is of any use for the palette. Whitman is the best of it, but he never pretended to have reached the goal. He knew himself, and proclaimed himself "a start in the right direction." He never said, "American poetry is to stay where I left it"; he said it was to go on from where he started it.

The cult of Poe is an exotic introduced via Mallarmé and Arthur Symons. Poe's glory as an inventor of macabre subjects has been shifted into a reputation for verse. The absurdity of the cult is well gauged by Mallarmé's French translation—*Et le corbeau dit jamais plus*.

A care for American letters does not consist in breeding a contentment with what has been produced, but in setting a standard for ambition. A decent artist weeps over a failure; a rotten artist tries to palm it off as a masterpiece.

[*To be continued.*]

NOTE.—I have not in this paper set out to give a whole history of poetry. I have tried in a way to set forth a color-sense. I have said, as it were, "Such poets are pure red . . . pure green." Knowledge of them is of as much use to a poet as the finding of good color is to a painter.

Undoubtedly pure color is to be found in Chinese poetry, when we begin to know enough about it; indeed, a shadow of this perfection is already at hand in translations. Liu Ch'e, Chu Yuan, Chia I, and the great *vers libre* writers before the Petrarchan age of Li Po, are a treasury to which the next century may look for as great a stimulus as the renaissance had from the Greeks.

Ezra Pound

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NOTE by the Editor.—Probably every poet may, without ceasing to be selective, exercise a certain liberty of taste in choosing the "pure color" for his palette. Indeed, Mr. Pound implies this. A symposium on the subject would be interesting. Most English-writing poets would probably find pure color in Poe—not in *The Raven*, which was, after all, a kind of stunt—but in *Helen, thy beauty is to me*, and one or two other bits. And are there not gleams of clarity in *Kubla Khan*, in *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, even in *Lycidas*?

But certain Shakespearean songs and sonnets would be the basis of my palette.

H. M.

MODERN GERMAN POETRY

II

Over and above the main body of poets who have succumbed to the equivocal position of the poet in modern German society, one or two men stand out who have overcome their difficulties.

First comes Hugo von Hofmannsthal, unequal, chary of production, but surely a fine poet. He is touched with neurosis—has he not written *Elektra*?—but the disease has not destroyed him. He has inherited the best strain of the German tradition, its deeper and more significant melancholy, and by the force of his personality he succeeds in escaping the sentimental. I think the *Ballade des äusseren Lebens* among the best of his shorter poems:

Und Kinder wachsen auf mit tiefen Augen,
Die von nichts wissen, wachsen auf und sterben
Und alle Menschen gehen ihrer Wege.

Und süsse Früchte werden aus den herben
Und fallen nachts wie tote Vögel nieder
Und liegen wenig Tage und verderben.

Modern German Poetry

Und immer weht der Wind, und immer wieder
Vernehmen wir und reden viele Worte
Und spüren Lust und Müdigkeit der Glieder.

Und Strassen laufen durch das Gras, und Orte
Sind da und dort, voll Fackeln, Bäumen, Teichen,
Und drohende, und totenhaft verdorrte. . . .

Wozu sind diese aufgebaut und gleichen
Einander nie? und sind unzählig viele?
Was wechselt Lachen, Weinen und Erblichen?

Was frommt das alles uns und diese Spiele,
Die wir doch gross und ewig einsam sind
Und wandernd immer, suchen irgend Ziele?

Was frommts, desgleichen viel gesehen haben?
Und dennoch sagt der viel, der "Abend" sagt.
Ein Wort, daraus Tiefsinn und Trauer rinnt.

Wie schwerer Honig aus den hohlen Waben.

Hofmannsthal is a link between classical German poetry and the modern European spirit. His poems are brimful of content. Compare with them the following two poems by Richard Schaukal:

PERSEPOLIS

Im blauen Mondlicht
 baden weisse
hohe breitausladende Treppen.
Säulenschatten schweigen
auf den marmornen Stufen.
Leise
auf weichen Tatzen
schleichen Löwen
lüstern suchend
über die Stiegen.

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GEFAHR

Durch ragendes Schilf zum gelben Strom
Unter den breiten Palmenfächern
Schleicht mit grünen gierigen Augen der Tiger.
Erschreckt verstummen die jauchsenden Vögel:
Nur das Knistern und Rascheln der Gräser und Stauden. . . .

Heiss und müde zum Bade rüstet ein Hindumädchen.
Spielend senkt sie die schmalen Füsse
In die raschen schmeichelnden kühlen Fluten. . . .
Plötzlich lauscht sie, neigt die Stirne,
Die Augen horchen ins bange Schweigen,
Die Arme stemmt sie auf, zittert . . .
Hinter ihr steht und stockt mit dampfendem Atem der Tiger,
Sein glühender Hauch fliegt über die glänzende Schulter. . . .
Nur das Gurgeln der Uferwellen
Und einer Seele ängstliches Flügelschlagen. . . .

Schaukal's reputation is at least equal to that of Hofmannsthal. Indeed his *In der Heimat* is for some mysterious reason one of the best known modern poems in Germany. Perhaps because it is easy to memorize. Most of Schaukal's poems are not, in spite of their slightness. Hofmannsthal's best poems are charged with intense feeling; Schaukal is always cold and correct. He avoids, however, both the sentimental and the vulgar, and for this reason he surpasses most of his contemporaries. He has studied Heine intelligently, and realized one of the secrets of his art. Heine escaped the sentimental by the perfection of his artistry. The form of his poems is so crystalized, so complete and satisfying, that it invariably gives us an artistic pleasure. Schaukal lacks humor and strong feeling, but he has made himself a very skilful craftsman, and he has imagination—albeit of a somewhat

theatrical character. He has a sense of grace, rare in German, and he loves rococo parties and Venetian gondolas. He is popular because the Germans wallow in the picturesque. In a word Schaukal has nothing to say, but gives us the impression that he would say it charmingly if he had. And this is perhaps better than talking nonsense! Moreover he can, as we see in the poems quoted above, call up a picture, which remains upon the mind, after the fashion of a successful stage-scene. On these grounds he justifies the claims of his admirers who invariably term him "distinguished."

But the poet in Germany who has triumphed most completely over his milieu and whose thought is most closely in touch with modern thought in other countries is Rainer Maria Rilke. Born in 1875, one year after Hofmannsthal, he is the first German poet of his epoch. He has the artistry of Schaukal, and imbues his work with an emotional quality more rich, more subtle and more sensitive than Hofmannsthal. He too is much influenced by Heine:

INITIALE

Aus unendlichen Sehnsüchten steigen
endliche Taten wie schwache Fontänen,
die sich zeitig und zitternd neigen.
Aber, die sich uns sonst verschweigen,
unsere fröhlichen Kräfte—zeigen
sich in diesen tanzenden Tränen.

Here we have an obvious echo. But the bitter springs in Heine's temperament are absent; Rilke's spirit is gentler, instinct with a great faith and a strong hopefulness tinged with mysticism. I know nothing in Heine quite so moving in its gentle simplicity as:

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DIE ERBLINDENDE

Sie sass so wie die anderen beim Tee.
Mir war zuerst, als ob sie ihre Tasse
eine wenig anders als die andern fasse.
Sie lächelt einmal. Es tat fast weh.

Und als man schliesslich sich erhob und sprach
und langsam und wie es der Zufall brachte
durch viele Zimmer ging (man sprach und lachte)
da sah ich sie. Sie ging den andern nach,

verhalten, so wie eine, welche gleich
wird singen müssen und vor vielen Leuten;
auf ihren hellen Augen, die sich freuten,
war Licht von aussen wie auf einem Teich.

Sie folgte langsam, und sie brauchte lang,
als wäre etwas noch nicht überstiegen.
Und doch: als ob, nach einem Übergang,
sie nicht mehr gehen würde, sondern fliegen.

Rilke has sly humor too. Witness the *Titelblatt* to *Die Stimmen*, or *Voices of the Under-men*.

Die Reichen und Glücklichen haben gut schweigen,
niemand will wissen, was sie sind.
Aber die Dürftigen müssen sich zeigen,
müssen sagen: ich bin blind;
oder, ich bin im Begriff, es zu werden;
oder, es geht mir nicht gut auf Erden;
oder, ich habe ein krankes Kind;
oder, da bin ich zusammengefügt.

Und vielleicht, dass das gar nicht genügt.

Und weil alle sonst, wie an Dingen,
an ihnen vorbeigehn, müssen sie singen.

Und da hört man noch guten Gesang!

It is just this attitude of Rilke's towards the under-man, free-minded but not sentimental, that places him in touch with modern thought. He realizes the place of the gentle and ineffectual in the scheme of things, and he neither rhapsodizes nor prates. He has no doctrines, only eyes that see and ears that hear, and deep feeling and hope that life will conquer in the end. I should have liked to quote in full his poems entitled *Aus einer Sturmnacht*. I can only quote extracts, but you will see the combination of power and sensibility that makes Rilke's poems so strangely moving. After the *Titelblatt* he plunges forward:

In solchen Nächten kannst du in den Gassen
Zukünftigen begegnen, schmalen blassen
Gesichtern, die dich nicht erkennen
und dich schweigend vorüberlassen.
Aber wenn sie zu reden begännen
wärest du ein Langevergänger,
wie du da stehst,
langerverwest.
Doch sie bleiben im Schweigen wie Tote,
obwohl sie die Kommenden sind.
Zukunft beginnt noch nicht.
Sie halten nur ihr Gesicht in die Zeit,
und können, wie unter Wasser, nicht schauen;
und ertragen sie's doch eine Weile,
sehn sie wie unter den Wellen: die Eile
Von Fischen und das Tauchen von Tauen.

In solchen Nächten gehn die Gefängnisse auf.
Und durch die bösen Träume der Wächter,
gehn mit leisem Gelächter
die Verächter ihrer Gewalt.
Wald! Sie kommen zu dir, um in dir zu schlafen,
Mit ihren langen Strafen behangen.
Wald!

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In solchen Nächten wächst mein Schwesterlein,
das vor mir war und vor mir starb, ganz klein.
Viel solche Nächte waren schon seither:
Sie muss schon schön sein. Bald wird irgendwer
sie frein.

In addition to these poets of the major pretension Germany has others who content themselves with less ambitious aims. They imitate Heine for the most part. Sometimes they are incredibly poor and lifeless, as for example the lyrics of the well known Ricarda Huch; sometimes their work is charming, light and neatly phrased. Otto Julius Bierbaum, who died recently, was perhaps the most successful of these, and his collection of twenty years' work—*Irrgarten Der Liebe, Verliebte, launenhafte, moralische und andere Gedichte*—is one of the most attractive productions among the minor lights.

Reginald H. Wilenski

REVIEWS

Satires of Circumstance, Lyrics and Reveries, with Miscellaneous Pieces, by Thomas Hardy. Macmillan.

The irony of fate, which has been the persistent subject of Mr. Hardy's art, is illustrated by his own destiny. We say, sing, paint, carve, build, only what we are. This poet, recording in many novels the pitiful play of men and women against the sardonic indifference of nature, voicing the cruel humor of life which maliciously thwarts its own joy, is an old man before he recognizes his deepest vocation, and turns to the muse's altar.

It is useless to wonder what we have missed through this tardy call to song. So many poets gave us their all in youth—Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Arnold, many another—that dawn seems the time for singing and it is difficult to understand this twilight voice of the sage. Yet in this case the inversion seems something more than a mere mischance—the irony covers a deeper meaning for those not satisfied with surface vision.

For Mr. Hardy's life has rounded slowly into shape, wrung out its essence tardily into music. He is as one who wanders long through stark bare country, up and down over sharp rocks, and comes at last, not to a mountain-top commanding great spaces, not to the Grand Canyon proud with glory, but to an eminence whence the country he has traveled loses its piecemeal littleness to gather together into a grave unity. There is no glamour, no splendor; the sky and the world are veiled with gray, and heavy clouds overhang the dim spaces beyond him. But there is a round earth to stand on, a sphered sky to breathe in, and a stern and solemn song to sing.

The indifference of nature becomes almost malice to this poet. In the "brake Cimmerian through which we grope" we may catch a fleeting futile moment of joy. But even joy's

large luminous living eyes
Regard me in fixed inquiring-wise
As those of a soul that weighed,
Scarce consciously,
The eternal question of what Life was,

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And why we were there, and by whose strange laws
That which mattered most could not be.

The poet makes God complain to man thus:

When you slowly emerged from the den of Time,
And gained percipience as you grew,
And fleshed you fair out of shapeless slime,
Wherefore, O Man, did there come to you
The unhappy need of creating me—
A form like your own—for praying to?

He emphasizes the ironic austerities of destiny with fifteen little incidents of common life, "satires of circumstance." Perhaps the last of these, the talk of a man at his wife's grave, is the most profoundly tragic:

"O lonely workman, standing there
In a dream, why do you stare and stare
At her grave, as no other grave there were?

"If your great gaunt eyes so importune
Her soul by the shine of this corpse-cold moon,
Maybe you'll raise her phantom soon."

"Why, fool, it is what I would rather see
Than all the living folk there be;
But alas, there is no such joy for me!"

"Ah, she was one you loved, no doubt,
Through good and evil, through rain and drought,
And when she passed, all your sun went out?"

"Nay, she was the woman I did not love,
Whom all the others were ranked above,
Whom during her life I thought nothing of."

In one or two poems we catch an echo of the epic theme of *The Dynasts*—the destructive futility of war. *Channel Firing*, in which dead soldiers of ancient wars sit up in their

coffins at the sound of guns, and find

All nations striving strong to make
Red war yet redder—

this might have been written last August instead of last April. And it more truly expresses the poet's feeling about war than the final war poem which repeats the conventional confidence that "victory crowns the just."

Mr. Hardy has been reproached often enough for harsh diction—such phrasing as "frilled by the numb of the morning," "fulth of numbers," "cold currents thrid," etc. But somehow the style suits the man and his subject, belongs to the bleak country he is travelling in. One must take him or leave him as he is in all his austere sincerity, this poet who, in the teeth of the chill gray wind, utters the truth of life as he feels it in music whose discords make a bitter tune.

H. M.

Open Water, by Arthur Stringer. John Lane Co.

Mr. Stringer has the over-heated enthusiasm of the convert. Having used rhyme and the usual metrical conventions since the days of *The Woman in the Rain*, he now, in an eloquent foreword to his latest book, discards them as "mediaeval apparel." The poet, he says, "must still don mail to face Mausers, and wear chain-armor against machine guns." "Rhyme has been imposed upon him," it is one of the "immuring traditions with which time and the prosodian have surrounded him." "Rhyme and meter have compelled him to sacrifice content for form, have left him incapable of what may be called abandonment."

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This has a familiar ring. Milton himself was hardly more emphatic when he denounced rhyme as "the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre." To him in the seventeenth century, as to Mr. Stringer and others today, it was "a troublesome and modern bondage," of "no true musical delight," imposed on the art by mediæval jinglers against the authority of the "learned ancients."

As POETRY has been a voice crying in the wilderness for freedom from trammels and conventions, urging the public to give rein to the poet's individuality, and accord him his own gait, whether it be rhyme or *vers libre*, it would be unbecoming to complain of the presence of this Saul among the prophets. But one may reasonably note that he does not wear the prophet's robes as though to the manner born. Mr. Stringer is not yet at home with free verse, which has its own boundaries and austerities. Poetry is no easier to achieve without rhyme and iambs than with them.

Many of these new poems seem too easily written. In none of them does one find such rhythmic beauty as Mr. Stringer attained in the blank verse of *The Woman at Dusk*, or such adroit and accomplished art as he revealed in that poignant narrative in quatrains, *The Girl Who Went to Ailey*. It may be that he will evolve a style in the new medium, but he does not yet convince us even by such resolute heroics as these:

God knows that I've tinkled and jingled and strummed,
That I've piped it and jigged it until I'm fair sick of the game

But now I want to slough off the bitterness born of it all,
 I want to throw off the shackles and chains of time . . .
 Yea, I will arise and go forth, I have said,
 To the uplands of truth, to be free as the wind,
 Rough and unruly and open and turbulent-throated!
 Yea, I will go forth and fling from my soul
 The shackles and chains of song!

Alas, one can't fling them away, those shackles. The finest poems in this new book are those in which Mr. Stringer has clung closest to the old measures. *Sappho's Tomb* has a delicate trochaic movement which seems to follow the light steps of the searchers. *At Charing Cross* is persistently iambic in its solemn march. And the beautiful wistful *Protestations* is as regular in form and movement as if it rhymed. Its closing lines perhaps outrank anything else in the book:

Yet the end of all is written,
 And nothing, O rose-leaf woman,
 You ever may dream or do
 Henceforth can bring me anguish
 Or crown my days with joy!
 Three tears, O stately woman,
 You said could float your soul,
 So little a thing it seemed.
 Yet all that's left of life
 I'd give to know your love,
 I'd give to show my love,
 And feel your kiss again!

Even this, however, is not so memorable as certain earlier poems by Mr. Stringer. Thus it is with some doubt that one wishes him a *bon voyage* on his new road. May he find masterpieces along the way!

H. M.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

It is with deep regret that we record the suspension of *Poetry and Drama*, the interesting quarterly which has been spokesman for the art in England, as POETRY is in America. Under the able editorship of Mr. Harold Monro, with the co-operation of the group of poets centering at the Poetry Bookshop, this magazine was winning its way to a permanent place and established authority, when the war broke over the world, and made any such venture precarious or impossible. Mr. Monro hopes to resume publication early in 1916, provided the war is over.

The last number is a particularly good one, containing new poetry by M. Émile Verhaeren the Belgian, Messrs. Robert Frost and Ezra Pound—Americans, and eighteen English poets, including Messrs. Lawrence, Flint, Aldington and Davies. Mr. Hueffer completes his study of *Impressionism*, and M. de Gourmont has an article on *French Literature and the War*.

Perhaps it is not too late to call our readers' attention to the wholly admirable article on *Prosody*, by the Laureate, in the September number of the same periodical. This subject is usually so befogged by all who write about it that an intelligent—nay, an illuminating—word is more than welcome.

H. M.

NOTES.

Mr. Vachel Lindsay, of Springfield, Illinois, needs no introduction to readers of POETRY, except for his revision of his name. His two books, *General Booth* (Kennerley) and *The Congo* (Macmillan), are aiding us to make his work familiar.

Mr. Lindsay wrote *The Chinese Nightingale* in Springfield and New York, between May and October, 1914, while his father and mother were in China visiting their son-in-law and daughter, who are medical missionaries at Lu-Chow-Fu. The poet, who has never seen China himself, says of the poem:

"The intention of the piece is to combine such elements of Chinese decoration and whim as are to be found by the superficial observer in the curio-store, the chop-suey restaurant, the laundry, the Chinese theatre. To these are to be added such general ideas of China as may be acquired in any brief résumé of their religion, their customs and temperament."

Mr. Edgar Lee Masters, a Chicago lawyer, is the "Webster Ford" whose *Spoon River Anthology*, running in nearly thirty numbers of *Reedy's Mirror*, has proved the literary sensation of the year, and may prove a masterpiece in the wise judgment of posterity, to be cherished especially in this region whose people it so vividly presents. The Macmillan Co. will make a book of it in the spring. Mr. Masters'

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earlier volumes are: *A Book of Verses* (1898), and *Maximilian, a Tragedy* (1902), besides prose plays and essays.

Mr. Victor Starbuck, also a lawyer by profession, lives in Orlando, Florida. A number of magazines have published his verse. "Violet Hunt" is an English poet.

With these three exceptions, our contributors this month have appeared before in POETRY. Mr. Orrick Johns, formerly of St. Louis, now lives in the country near New Haven. Miss Margaret Widdemer has removed from Philadelphia to Brooklyn. Mr. Richard Aldington is still in London as one of the editors of *The Egoist*, but he may be called to the front among the reserves. Mr. Francis Buzzell lives in Chicago. None of these has published a book of verse as yet, though the first three are well known through much-quoted contributions to the magazines. Mr. Buzzell is almost a newcomer.

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Pitfalls yawn before the feet of an editor. Twice of late have we fallen in.

Conquered, by Miss Zoë Akins, which we printed last month, was published last spring in the *International*, through a mistake of one of the editors of that monthly, to whom it had been sent for private perusal. The poet, from whom we had previously accepted it, forgot to inform us at the time, and we, who usually read Mr. Viereck's cleverly ardent paper, apparently missed that issue.

The other error is more serious. The printer's devil is no fabulous creature of myth, but a real monster of sin and

malice. From our January issue he dropped the first line of *The Musicmaker's Child*, by Miss Miriam Allen de Ford, thereby doing his utmost to make the poem unintelligible. The first quatrain should read:

Long time my mother lived in Culm,
A maiden, waiting for a man to take her:
Then, for the love of his blue eyes,
She wandered after Weir the musicmaker.

The error, for which the editor apologizes to poet and readers, will be noted also among the errata after the title-page of Vol. V in the March number.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

- Efterladte Digte*, by Agnes Mathilde Wergeland. Privately printed.
- Sonnets of a Portrait-Painter*, by Arthur Davison Ficke. Kennerley.
- A Book of Common Verse*, by Albert L. Berry. Privately printed.
- Poems*, by Geneva W. Harrison. Privately printed.
- Life-Colors*, by Adeline Hinckley. Neale Publishing Co.
- Harpstring and Bowstring*, by Ethel Wahl Harmon. Privately printed.
- The Gift*, by Sara Bard Field. Privately printed.
- Thoughts in Verse*, by John Bonus. Longmans, Green & Co.
- A Vision of Reconciliation and Other Verses*, by Edward McQueen Gray. Methuen & Co., Ltd., London.
- Satires of Circumstance*, by Thomas Hardy. Macmillan.
- "Der Tag," or The Tragic Man*, by J. M. Barrie. Scribner.
- Daybreak*, by Elizabeth W. F. Jackson. Privately printed.
- Gleanings from Dixie-Land*, by Effie T. Battle. Privately printed.
- The Cosmos and Other Poems*, by Herbert Goodell. Privately printed.
- Ballads of Blyndam Town*, by Robert DeCamp Leland. Paul Bailey, Amityville, N. Y.

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 The Spring—The Coming of War: Actæon—
 The Gipsy—Game of Chess.
 s Letter Rihaku (Li Po)
 Translated by Ezra Pound
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POEMS



There is a place of trees . . . gray with lichen.

At Chalais

is a pleached arbor ;
Old pensioners and old protected women
Have the right there—

it is charity.
I have crept over old rafters,
peering down

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Over the Dronne,
 over a stream full of lilies.
Eastward the road lies,
 Aubeterre is eastward,
With a garrulous old man at the inn.
I know the roads in that place:
Mareuil to the north-east,
 La Tour,
There are three keeps near Mareuil,
And an old woman,
 glad to hear Arnaut,
Glad to lend one dry clothing.

I have walked
 into Perigord,
I have seen the torch-flames, high-leaping,
Painting the front of that church,
And, under the dark, whirling laughter.
I have looked back over the stream
 and seen the high building,
Seen the long minarets, the white shafts.
I have gone in Ribeyrac
 and in Sarlat,
I have climbed rickety stairs, heard talk of Croy,
Walked over En Bertran's old layout,
Have seen Narbonne, and Cahors and Chalus,
Have seen Excideuil, carefully fashioned.

Provincia Deserta

I have said:

“Here such a one walked.

“Here Coeur-de-Lion was slain.

“Here was good singing.

“Here one man hastened his step.

“Here one lay panting.”

I have looked south from Hautefort,
thinking of Montaignac, southward.

I have lain in Rocafixada,
level with sunset,

Have seen the copper come down
tinging the mountains,

I have seen the fields, pale, clear as an emerald,
Sharp peaks, high spurs, distant castles.

I have said: “The old roads have lain here.

“Men have gone by such and such valleys,

“Where the great halls are closer together.”

I have seen Foix on its rocks, seen Toulouse and Arles greatly
altered,

I have seen the ruined “Dorata.”

I have said:

“Riquier! Guido.”

I have thought of the second Troy,
Some little prized place in Auvergnat:
Two men tossing a coin, one keeping a castle,
One set on the highway to sing.

He sang a woman.

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Auvergne rose to the song;

The Dauphin backed him.

"The castle to Austors!"

"Pieire kept the singing—

"A fair man and a pleasant."

He won the lady,

Stole her away for himself, kept her against armed force:

So ends that story.

That age is gone;

Pieire de Maensac is gone.

I have walked over these roads;

I have thought of them living.

IMAGE FROM D'ORLEANS

Young men riding in the street

In the bright new season

Spur without reason,

Causing their steeds to leap.

And at the pace they keep

Their horses' armored feet

Strike sparks from the cobbled street

In the bright new season.

The Spring

THE SPRING

Cydonian spring with her attendant train,
Maelids and water-girls,
Stepping beneath a boisterous wind from Thrace,
Throughout this sylvan place
Spreads the bright tips,
And every vine-stock is
Clad in new brilliancies.

And wild desire
Falls like black lightning.
O bewildered heart,
Though every branch have back what last year lost,
She, who moved here amid the cyclamen,
Moves only now a clinging tenuous ghost.

THE COMING OF WAR: ACTAEON

An image of Lethe,
and the fields
Full of faint light
but golden,
Gray cliffs,
and beneath them
A sea
Harsher than granite,
unstill, never ceasing ;

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

High forms
 with the movement of gods,
Perilous aspect;
 And one said:
"This is Actaeon."
 Actaeon of golden greaves!

Over fair meadows,
Over the cool face of that field,
Unstill, ever moving,
Host of an ancient people,
The silent cortège.

THE GIPSY

*"Est-ce que vous avez vu des autres—des camarades—avec des
singes ou des ours?"*

A stray gipsy—A. D. 1912

That was the top of the walk, when he said:
"Have you seen any others, any of our lot,
"With apes or bears?"
 —A brown upstanding fellow
Not like the half-castes,
 up on the wet road near Clermont.
The wind came, and the rain,
And mist clotted about the trees in the valley,
And I'd the long ways behind me,
 gray Arles and Biaucaire,

Game of Chess

And he said, "Have you seen any of our lot?"

I'd seen a lot of his lot . . .
 ever since Rhodéz,
Coming down from the fair
 of St. John,
With caravans, but never an ape or a bear.

DOGMATIC STATEMENT CONCERNING THE GAME OF CHESS:

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Red knights, brown bishops, bright queens,
Striking the board, falling in strong "I"s of color,
Reaching and striking in angles,
 holding lines in one color.
This board is alive with light;
 these pieces are living in form,
Their moves break and reform the pattern:
 Luminous green from the rooks,
Clashing with "x"s of queens,
 looped with the knight-leaps.

"Y" pawns, cleaving, embanking!
Whirl! Centripetal! Mate! King down in the vortex,
Clash, leaping of bands, straight stripe of hard color,
Blocked light working in. Escapes. Renewing of contest.

Ezra Pound

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

EXILE'S LETTER

From the Chinese of Rihaku (Li Po), usually considered the greatest poet of China: written by him while in exile about 760 A. D., to the Hereditary War-Councillor of Shu, "recollecting former companionship."

So-Kin of Rakuho, ancient friend, I now remember
That you built me a special tavern,
By the south side of the bridge at Ten-Shin.
With yellow gold and white jewels
 we paid for the songs and laughter,
And we were drunk for month after month,
 forgetting the kings and princes.
Intelligent men came drifting in, from the sea
 and from the west border,
And with them, and with you especially,
 there was nothing at cross-purpose;
And they made nothing of sea-crossing
 or of mountain-crossing
If only they could be of that fellowship.
And we all spoke out our hearts and minds . . .
 and without regret.
And then I was sent off to South Wei,
 smothered in laurel groves,
And you to the north of Raku-hoku,
Till we had nothing but thoughts and memories between us.
And when separation had come to its worst
We met, and travelled together into Sen-Go

Exile's Letter

Through all the thirty-six folds of the turning and twisting
waters;

Into a valley of a thousand bright flowers . . .
that was the first valley,

And on into ten thousand valleys
full of voices and pine-winds.

With silver harness and reins of gold,
prostrating themselves on the ground,

Out came the East-of-Kan foreman and his company;
And there came also the "True-man" of Shi-yo to meet me,
Playing on a jewelled mouth-organ.

In the storied houses of San-Ko they gave us
more Sennin music;

Many instruments, like the sound of young phoenix broods.

And the foreman of Kan-Chu, drunk,
Danced because his long sleeves

Wouldn't keep still, with that music playing.

And I, wrapped in brocade, went to sleep with my head on
his lap,

And my spirit so high that it was all over the heavens.

And before the end of the day we were scattered like stars
or rain.

I had to be off to So, far away over the waters,
You back to your river-bridge.

And your father, who was brave as a leopard,
Was governor in Hei Shu and put down the barbarian rabble.

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And one May he had you send for me, despite the long
distance;
And what with broken wheels and so on, I won't say it
wasn't hard going . . .
Over roads twisted like sheep's guts.
And I was still going, late in the year,
 in the cutting wind from the north,
And thinking how little you cared for the cost . . .
 and you caring enough to pay it.
Then what a reception!
Red jade cups, food well set, on a blue jewelled table;
And I was drunk, and had no thought of returning;
And you would walk out with me to the western corner of
the castle,
To the dynastic temple, with the water about it clear as blue
jade,
With boats floating, and the sound of mouth-organs and
drums,
With ripples like dragon-scales going grass-green on the
water,
Pleasure lasting, with courtezans going and coming without
hindrance,
With the willow-flakes falling like snow,
And the vermilioned girls getting drunk about sunset,
And the waters a hundred feet deep reflecting green eye-
brows—
Eyebrows painted green are a fine sight in young moonlight,

Exile's Letter

Gracefully painted—and the girls singing back at each other,
Dancing in transparent brocade,
And the wind lifting the song, and interrupting it,
Tossing it up under the clouds.

And all this comes to an end,
And is not again to be met with.
I went up to the court for examination,
Tried Layu's luck, offered the Choyu song,
And got no promotion,
And went back to the East Mountains white-headed.

And once again we met, later, at the South Bridge head.
And then the crowd broke up—you went north to San palace.
And if you ask how I regret that parting?
It is like the flowers falling at spring's end,
 confused, whirled in a tangle.
What is the use of talking! And there is no end of talking—
There is no end of things in the heart.

I call in the boy,
Have him sit on his knees to write and seal this,
And I send it a thousand miles, thinking.

Rihaku (Li Po)

Translated by Ezra Pound from the notes of the late Ernest Fenollosa, and the decipherings of the Professors Mori and Araga.

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LIADAIN TO CURITHIR

Liadain and Curithir were two poets who lived in Ireland in the seventh century. They fell in love, but while Curithir was absent making preparations for their marriage, Liadain, for some unexplained reason, took the vows of a nun. Curithir in despair became a monk. At first they continued to see each other, but when this led to the breaking of their vows, Curithir left Liadain to spend his life in penance and thus save his soul.

I

If I had known how narrow a prison is love,
Never would I have given the width of the skies
In return for thy kiss, O Curithir, thou my grief!

If I had known love's poverty, I would have given
Dúns and forests and ploughlands and begged my bread:
For now I have lost the earth and the stars and my soul.

If I had known the strength of love, I would have laid
The ridge of the world in ashes to stay his feet:
I would have cried on a stronger lord—on Death.

II

I, that was wont to pass by all unmoved
As the long ridge of the tide sweeps to the shore,
Am broken at last on the crags of a pitiless love.

Liadain to Curithir

I, who was wont to see men pale at my glance,
Like the quivering grass am shaken beneath thine eyes;
At thy touch my spirit is captive, my will is lost.

I would darken the sun and moon to break from thy love,
I would shatter the world to win thee again to my side.
O aching madness of love! Have the dead repose?
Or wilt thou tear my heart in the close-shut grave?

III

I have done with blame, I have risen from the cold earth
Where night and day my forehead has known the clay.
With faltering steps I have passed out to the sun.

Now in the sight of all I stand, that all may know
(For I myself will praise thee and prove their words)
How great was thy wisdom in turning away from me.

Who that has drunken wine will keep the lees?
Who that has slain a man will wait for revenge?
Who that has had his desire of a woman will stay?

Farewell, O Curithir, let thy soul be saved!
I have not found a thing that is dearer to thee.
In the eyes of God is it priceless? Who can say!

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My soul is a thing of little worth unto God:
Of less worth unto thee, O Curithir, than my love.
And unto me so small I flung it beneath thy feet.

IV

If the dark earth hold a Power that is not God
I pray It to bind up memory lest I die.

There was a day when Curithir loved me, now it is gone.
It was I that sundered his love from me, I myself;
Or it was God who struck me with madness and mocked.

If the dark earth hold a Power that is not God
I pray It to hide me for ever away from His face.

V

All things are outworn now—grief is dead,
And passion has fallen from me like a withered leaf.
Little it were to me now though Curithir were beside me:
Though he should pass I would not turn my head.
My heart is like a stone in my body.
All I have grasped I loose again from my hands.

Moireen Fox

POEMS

THE WIND SLEEPERS

Whiter
than the crust
left by the tide,
we are stung by the hurled sand
and the broken shells.

We no longer sleep,
sleep in the wind.
We awoke and fled
through the Peiraeic gate.

Tear—
tear us an altar.
Tug at the cliff-boulders,
pile them with the rough stones.
We no longer
sleep in the wind.
Propitiate us.

Chant in a wail
that never halts.
Pace a circle and pay tribute
with a song.

When the roar of a dropped wave
breaks into it,

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pour meted words
of sea-hawks and gulls
and sea-birds that cry
discords.

STORM

I

You crash over the trees,
you crack the live branch:
the branch is white,
the green crushed,
each leaf is rent like split wood.

II

You burden the trees
with black drops,
you swirl and crash:
you have broken off a weighted leaf
in the wind—
it is hurled out,
whirls up and sinks,
a green stone.

THE POOL

Are you alive?
I touch you with my thumb.

You quiver like a sea-fish.
I cover you with my net.
What are you—banded-one?

THE GARDEN

I

You are clear,
O rose, cut in rock.

I could scrape the color
from the petals,
like spilt dye from a rock.

If I could break you
I could break a tree.

If I could stir
I could break a tree,
I could break you.

II

O wind, rend open the heat,
cut apart the heat,
slit it to tatters.

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Fruit cannot drop
through this thick air:
fruit cannot fall into heat
that presses up and blunts
the points of pears,
and rounds grapes.

Cut the heat:
plough through it,
turning it on either side
of your path.

MOONRISE

Will you glimmer on the sea?
Will you fling your spear-head
on the shore?
What note shall we pitch?

We have a song,
on the bank we share our arrows—
the loosed string tells our note:

O flight,
bring her swiftly to our song.
She is great,
we measure her by the pine-trees.
H. D.

IN AN OLD LODGING-HOUSE

Old house, old room, what do you think of me,
And all my little windy smiles and tears—
My easy woe and easier ecstasy:
Old house, old room, who know the falling years?

I wonder if my loneliness is strange
To you, tall windows, free with night and day.
Who else has loved the seasons' lingering change
Across the courts and roofs? What eyes more gay

Have glanced through you, nor watched the moon too well
Because they sought some face less cold and far?
What feet upon your wornout thresholds fell,
More light, more daring, than my dull feet are?

Or, oh, what passionate sorrow may have swept
From wall to wall, and shaken them like cloth?
What weary wounded arrogance has kept
A blundering watch here, like a wing-scorched moth?

Has Death lain here, maybe, all night, all night,
Where I in ruddy restlessness do lie:
The folded hands, the lips so smiling white?
O room, what wind of Fate has lashed you high

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Upon the wave of tragedy and tears?
And I sit here, and write such foolish things!
Old house, old room, who know the falling years,
How faint must be my gloom and gloryings!

TONIGHT

My mother died when I was young,
Yet not too young to know
What terror round the dark halls clung
That aching day of snow.

I knew she could not comfort me.
I sat there all alone.
Cold sorrow held me quietly
Dumb as a snow-hid stone.

And yet I seemed to watch it all
As in a picture-book:
The silent people in the hall,
My father's frozen look,

The heaped white roses, and my dress
So very black and new.
I watched it without weariness—
Ah, how the snow-blast blew!

* * * * *

Tonight

Tonight you say you love me—me
Who leap to love you. Lo,
I am all yours so utterly
You need not speak, nor show

One sign, but I shall understand
Out to our life's last rim;
Out into death's uncertain land,
Gracious be it or grim.

I am all yours. And yet tonight
The old trick haunts me. Look!
I see your face, O new delight,
As in a picture-book.

Your face, your shape, the fire-lit room,
The red rose on the shelf;
And, leaning to its passionate bloom,
Troubled with love, myself.

Oh, hold your hand across my eyes—
They have no right to see!
But now, as then, they are too wise:
They stare—they frighten me!

Fannie Stearns Davis

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THE BACCHANTE TO HER BABE

Scherzo

Come, sprite, and dance! The sun is up,
The wind runs laughing down the sky
That brims with morning like a cup.
Sprite, we must race him,
We must chase him—
You and I!
And skim across the fuzzy heather—
You and joy and I together
Whirling by!

You merry little roll of fat!—
Made warm to kiss, and smooth to pat,
And round to toy with, like a cub;
To put one's nozzle in and rub
And breathe you in like breath of kine,
Like juice of vine,
That sets my morning heart a-tingling,
Dancing, jingling,
All the glad abandon mingling
Of wind and wine!

Sprite, you are love, and you are joy,
A happiness, a dream, a toy,
A god to laugh with,
Love to chaff with,

The Bacchante to Her Babe

The sun come down in tangled gold,
The moon to kiss, and spring to hold.

There was a time once, long ago,
Long—oh, long since . . . I scarcely know.
Almost I had forgot . . .
There was a time when you were not,
You merry sprite, save as a strain,
The strange dull pain
Of green buds swelling
In warm, straight dwelling
That must burst to the April rain.
A little heavy I was then
And dull—and glad to rest. And when
The travail came
In searing flame . . .
But, sprite, that was so long ago!—
A century!—I scarcely know.
Almost I had forgot
When you were not.

So, little sprite, come dance with me!
The sun is up, the wind is free!
Come now and trip it,
Romp and skip it,
Earth is young and so are we.
Sprite, you and I will dance together

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On the heather,
Glad with all the procreant earth,
With all the fruitage of the trees,
And golden pollen on the breeze,
With plants that bring the grain to birth,
With beast and bird,
Feathered and furred,
With youth and hope and life and love,
And joy thereof—
While we are part of all, we two—
For my glad burgeoning in you!

So, merry little roll of fat,
Made warm to kiss and smooth to pat
And round to toy with, like a cub,
To put one's nozzle in and rub,
My god to laugh with,
Love to chaff with,
Come and dance beneath the sky,
You and I!
Look out with those round wondering eyes,
And squirm, and gurgle—and grow wise!
Eunice Tietjens

SIX LYRICS

I AM WEARY OF BEING BITTER

I am weary of being bitter and weary of being wise,
And the armor and the mask of these fall from me, after
 long.
I would go where the islands sleep, or where the sea-dawns
 rise,
And lose my bitter wisdom in the wisdom of a song.

There are magics in melodies, unknown of the sages;
The powers of purest wonder on secret wings go by.
Doubtless out of the silence of dumb preceding ages
Song woke the chaos-world—and light swept the sky.

All that we know is idle; idle is all we cherish;
Idle the will that takes loads that proclaim it strong.
For the knowledge, the strength, the burden—all shall perish:
One thing only endures, one thing only—song.

THE BIRDCAGE

O tragic bird! whose bleeding feet,
Whose maddened wings dizzily beat
Against your cage in agony—
Soon, soon to win your liberty!
Still you believe that happiness

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Dwells just beyond the bars you press
That if a sudden miracle
Gave your desire, life would be well.
The old, old dream! The old, old lure!
The devil plays; his stakes are sure.
With happiness he baits his gin
That still mankind shall perish in.
And still we trust our hearts could be
Blessed by the distant liberty,
Blind to the newer agony!
The earth will be a frozen coal
Before man knows his traitor soul.

DON GIOVANNI

It is not lust that leads me,
It is not evil drives me;
But beauty, beauty, beauty,
Calling afar off.

Prophet and poet know my urge and torture;
Hermit and dreamer are my errant brothers.
For I am mad with unattained beauty
Calling afar off. . . .

The fairer morrow, the horizons
Lighted beyond old borders,
The world's one savior—beauty
Calling afar off.

Like Him Whose Spirit

LIKE HIM WHOSE SPIRIT

Like him whose spirit in the blaze of noon
Still keeps the memory of one secret star
That in the dusk of a remembered June
Thrilled the strange hour with beauty from afar—
And perilous spells of twilight snare his heart,
And wistful moods his common thoughts subdue,
And life seethes by him utterly apart—
Last night I dreamed, today I dream, of you.
Gleams downward strike; bright bubbles upward hover
Through the charmed air; far sea-winds cool my brow.
Invisible lips tell me I shall discover
Today a temple, a mystery, a vow . . .
The cycle rounds: only the false seems true.
Last night I dreamed, today I dream, of you.

SNOWTIME

Is it summer that you crave—
Swallows dipping wing,
Evening light across the wave—
Or some farther thing?

Some report of happier places—
Golden times and lands,

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New and wonder-laden faces,
New and eager hands?

Nay, you know not . . . But I know
Round you cold is furled,
Like this shroud of trampled snow
Smothering the world:

Where no trust in any spring
Now can heal or save,
Nor the icy sunlight bring
Swallows o'er the wave.

MEETING

Gray-robed Wanderer in sleep . . . Wanderer . . .
You also move among
Those silent halls
Dim on the shore of the unsailed deep?
And your footfalls, yours also, Wanderer,
Faint through those twilight corridors have rung?

Of late my eyes have seen . . . Wanderer . . .
Amid the shadows' gloom
Of that sleep-girdled place
I should have known such joy could not have been—

Meeting

To see your face: and yet, Wanderer,
What hopes seem vain beneath the night in bloom?

Wearily I awake . . . Wanderer . . .
Your look of old despair,
Like a dying star,
In morning vanishes. But for all memories' sake,
Though you are far, tonight, O Wanderer,
Tonight come, though in silence, to the shadows there . . .

Arthur Davison Ficke

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COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

THE FIGHT FOR THE CROWD

The Book and Play Club had an "editors' night" last month, when spokesmen for various Chicago weeklies and monthlies uttered their pleas and complaints. It was mostly the same story—the difficulty of finding and winning over a public for art, for ideas, while the great headlong tolerant American crowd huddles like sheep in the droves of the commercial exploiters of this or that feature or fashion, this or that impulse or interest, of the hour.

Also it was a confession of motives and feelings. Mr. Alexander Kahn loved the *Little Review* like a sweetheart, the editor of *The Dial* admitted his aversion from its conventionality, and one and all longed for that free enlightened weekly which shall outrank all other papers of whatever time or clime, and make Chicago the centre of the earth. Incidentally there were more personal confessions. Mr. Edgar Lee Masters, for example, told how the *Spoon River Anthology* was conceived nearly a year ago, when his mind, already shaken out of certain literary prejudices by the reading in POETRY of much free verse, especially that of Mr. Carl Sandburg, was spurred to more active radicalism through a friendship with that iconoclastic champion of free speech, free form, free art—freedom of the soul. At this acknowledgment that POETRY had furnished the spark which kindled a poet's soul to living flame, and burned out of it the dry refuse of formalism, this editor, in her corner, felt a thrill of

The Fight for the Crowd

pride, and a sudden warmth of unalterable conviction that, whatever may happen to the magazine now or later, its work can never be counted vain.

After POETRY, *The Little Review*, *The Dial*, *Drama*, etc., had confessed bitter struggles to keep above water, we were patted on the head and condescendingly put in our place as "uplift magazines" by one of the numerous popular monthlies which, though no one ever hears of them, go out from Chicago to eager millions. "We don't turn over our hands to get subscribers," said the charmingly complacent editor, "yet nothing can stop them; after two brief years of life we have two hundred thousand—thirty thousand new ones since October. I fear these well-meaning neighbors of mine don't give you what you want."

As the audience laughed, the mind of at least one editor transformed it, and multiplied it by millions, until it included the vast constituency of all those incredibly popular magazines. I saw as in a *Piers Ploughman* vision the myriads of "new readers" stretching from sea to sea—the huge easy-going American public following trampled roads, gulping down pre-digested foods, seeking comfortable goals, suspicious always of ideas, of torches, of climbing feet, of singing voices—a public which does not stone its prophets, finding it more effective to ignore them.

But, strangely enough, the vision brought, instead of bitterness, a deep warming of the heart. Is it not the same old crowd that Langland saw—the struggling, suffering toilers who starve in body and mind, who clutch at any straw

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of comfort and follow any casual cry, who dream deep dreams which they dare not admit and cannot express, who grope for beauty and truth through tinsel trickeries and smug falsities? Are not the prophets one with them because the prophets, each in his degree, are doing the same thing—plunging with such lights as they have into the darkness? Indeed, only the prophets are aware of what all are doing, aware of the uncharted immensities against which our little human torches flicker and flare; so they alone feel the urgent impulse to lift their torches high, to cry aloud, to reveal, to lead.

The crowd rebels against the universal theme of art—the littleness of man—or, rather, the abysmal contrast between his littleness and his greatness. In old Chinese paintings there is always some little weazened philosopher squinting at the cataract; and so in all great art stands the absurd, earth-bound, gnome-like figure of humanity facing the infinite with inadequate and unattainable dreams. Deep-buried in the heart of every man is some effigy of this figure, but most men are afraid of it, like to bury it deeper under conventional occupations, sentimentalities, moralities, instead of permitting artists and prophets to unearth it and expose it to the pitiless light. But every man's heart, however perverse with ignorance, however cluttered with knowledge, makes a secret confession of the truth. Poets and prophets, therefore—the beauty of art, the sublimity of truth—appeal to him not quite in vain; and the appeal must go on so long as the race endures. To the last trench and the last despair

The Renaissance

certain spirits, in whom the common human spark of love becomes a flaming passion, must keep up the eternal impossible fight for souls, for "a kingdom of heaven on earth."

H. M.

THE RENAISSANCE

II

Whether from habit, or from profound intuition, or from sheer national conceit, one is always looking to America for signs of a "renaissance." One is open-eyed to defects. I have heard passionate nonentities rave about America's literary and artistic barrenness. I have heard the greatest living American saying, with the measured tones of deliberative curiosity, "Strange how all taint of art or letters seems to shun that continent . . . ah . . . ah, God knows there's little enough here . . . ah . . ."

And yet we look to the dawn, we count up our symptoms; year in and year out we say we have this and that, we have so much, and so much. Our best asset is a thing of the spirit. I have the ring of it in a letter, now on my desk, from a good but little known poet, complaining of desperate loneliness, envying Synge his material, to-wit, the Arran Islands and people, wishing me well with my exotics, and ending with a sort of defiance: "For me nothing exists, *really exists*, outside America."

That writer is not alone in his feeling, nor is he alone in his belief in tomorrow. That emotion and belief are our motive forces, and as to their application we can perhaps

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best serve it by taking stock of what we have, and devising practical measures. And we must do this without pride, and without parochialism; we have no one to cheat save ourselves. It is not a question of scaring someone else, but of making ourselves efficient. We must learn what we can from the past, we must learn what other nations have done successfully under similar circumstances, we must think how they did it.

We have, to begin with, architecture, the first of the arts to arrive, the most material, the most dependent on the inner need of the poor—for the arts are noble only as they meet the inner need of the poor. Bach is given to all men, Homer is given to all men: you need only the faculty of music or of patience to read or to hear. Painting and sculpture are given to all men in a particular place, to all who have money for travel.

And architecture comes first, being the finest branch of advertisement, advertisement of some god who has been successful, or of some emperor or of some business man—a material need, plus display. At any rate we have architecture, the only architecture of our time. I do not mean our copies of old buildings, lovely and lovable as they are; I mean our own creations, our office buildings like greater *campanili*, and so on.

And we have, or we are beginning to have, collections. We have had at least one scholar in Ernest Fenollosa, and one patron in Mr. Freer. I mean that these two men at least have worked as the great Italian researchers and col-

lectors of the quattrocento worked and collected. But mostly America, from the White House to the gutter, is still dominated by a "puritanical" hatred of what is beyond its understanding.

So it is to the fighting minority that I speak, to a minority that has been until now gradually forced out of the country. We have looked to the wrong powers. We have not sufficiently looked to ourselves. We have not defined the hostility or inertia that is against us. We have not recognized with any Voltairian clearness the nature of this opposition, and we have not realized to what an extent a renaissance is a thing made—a thing made by conscious propaganda.

The scholars of the quattrocento had just as stiff a stupidity and contentment and ignorance to contend with. It is from the biographies of Erasmus and Lorenzo Valla that we must find consolation. They were willing to work at foundations. They did not give the crowd what it wanted. The middle ages had been a jumble. There may have been a charming diversity, but there was also the darkness of decentralization. There had been minute vortices at such castles as that of Savairic de Maleon, and later at the universities. But the *rinascimento* began when Valla wrote, in the preface of the *Elegantiae*:

Linguam Latinam distribuisse minus erit, optimam frugem, et vere divinam, nec corporis, sed animi cibum? Haec enim gentes populosque omnes, omnibus artibus, quae liberales vocantur, instituit: haec optimas leges edocuit: haec viam ad omnem sapientiam munivit, haec denique praestitit, ne barbari amplius dici pos-

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sent. . . . In qua lingua disciplinae cunctae libero homine dignae continentur. . . . Linguam Romanam vivere plus, quam urbem.

"Magnum ergo Latini sermonis sacramentum est." "Ibi namque Romanum imperium est, ubicunque Romana lingua dominatur."

That is not "the revival of classicism." It is not a worship of corpses. It is an appreciation of the great Roman vortex, an understanding of, and an awakening to, the value of a capital, the value of centralization, in matters of knowledge and art, and of the interaction and stimulus of genius foregathered. *Ubicunque Romana lingua dominatur!*

That sense, that reawakening to the sense of the capital, resulted not in a single great vortex, such as Dante had dreamed of in his propaganda for a great central court, a peace tribunal, and in all his ghibelline speculations; but it did result in the numerous vortices of the Italian cities, striving against each other not only in commerce but in the arts as well.

America has no natural capital. Washington is a political machine, I dare say a good enough one. If we are to have an art capital it also must be made by conscious effort. No city will make such effort on behalf of any other city. The city that plays for this glory will have to plot, deliberately to plot, for the gathering in of great artists, not merely as incidental lecturers but as residents. She will have to plot for the centralization of young artists. She will have to give them living conditions as comfortable as Paris has given since the days of Abelard.

The universities can no longer remain divorced from contemporary intellectual activity. The press cannot longer remain divorced from the vitality and precision of an awakened university scholarship. Art and scholarship need not be wholly at loggerheads.

But above all there must be living conditions for artists; not merely for illustrators and magazine writers, not merely for commercial producers, catering to what they think "the public" or "their readers" desire.

Great art does not depend on the support of riches, but without such aid it will be individual, separate, and spasmodic; it will not group and become a great period. The individual artist will do fine work in corners, to be discovered after his death. Some good enough poet will be spoiled by trying to write stuff as vendible as bath-tubs; or another because, not willing or able to rely on his creative work, he had to make his mind didactic by preparing to be a professor of literature, or abstract by trying to be a professor of philosophy, or had to participate in some other fiasco. But for all that you will not be able to stop the great art, the true art, of the man of genius.

Great art does not depend upon comfort, it does not depend upon the support of riches. But a great age is brought about only with the aid of wealth, because a great age means the deliberate fostering of genius, the gathering-in and grouping and encouragement of artists.

In my final paper of this series, I shall put forth certain plans for improvement.

Ezra Pound

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A MODERN EPIC OF WAR

It is no wonder that Mr. Thomas Hardy's dramatic epic, *The Dynasts*, is being given as a pageant in London. Indeed, the wonder was that during the first months of the war, when every little poem on the subject was eagerly read, so little was said about this big poem, which stages enormously the huge tragedy of war.

It is a poem both old and new. More than ten years ago appeared the first volume of this dramatization of Europe disturbed—the period from Napoleon's assumption of dynastic power to his defeat at Waterloo. War, as a kind of madness, a horror, a folly, has for decades been preached; yet this poem, which is a massive symbol of this doctrine, has been little read. Perhaps because *The Dynasts* is a departure in English patriot poetry, because it has none of the forced call to England's past glory of Alfred Noyes' *Drake*, nothing of Kipling's tumult and shouting disguised as prayer, England finds the poem too subdued for her liking. Yet as a vision or prevision of the present war *The Dynasts* is for here and now.

There is a semblance of technical drama in this ten years of history. The poet has doubled the triangle of rise, climax and dénouement. Napoleon, as the supreme dynast, completes this program, from his crowning in Milan to Waterloo; England, his opponent, acts as a counter-force in her over-sea fighting from Trafalgar to Waterloo. This history everyone knows; its very closeness to fact is all the better

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basic substance of this symbolized "monster devastation." This is most vivid in the Dumb Shows, which, placed like parentheses on the page, are really pictures of benumbing terror, more subtle than those in Tolstoi's *War and Peace*. Choruses body forth movements too vast for any stage; spirits chant their pity or their resignation, or their sneer at a "world so ill contrived."

In this pageant, which is too literal to be dramatic, and in this drama, which is too philosophic to more than flap the wings of poesy, there is a great idea. If this is held to, whatever is tedious in the twenty or more acts is overborne by the essential conception—the gratuitous gambling in life by dynasts, and the leaden cruelty of their war game. To dramatize this idea, Mr. Hardy had to depart from the usual type of historical play. There can be no hero with the halo light as in the old epics; no apotheosis of personal courage, as in Shakespeare's or Schiller's hero plays. We see, not the glory, but "the poor faint poesy of war;" we are placed behind the scenes of "this poor painted show called soldiering."

Tragedy, in the autere sense, is not possible where there are no staged heroes. The bitter-fate mood of tragic conflict is too fine for dynasts who drive their subjects like sheep to slaughter. Napoleon is sometimes made to speak as though fate and destiny were his counsellors; but his speeches are weak, too imitative of the heroic manner of Shakespeare. This poet has neither temperament nor philosophy for tragedy. His doctrine of the individual and the race as will-less

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precludes a fight with fate. His dynasts and their subjects are, like Jude and Tess and Giles Winterbourne, victims of "eternal artistries in circumstance;" they know but "narrow freedom;" they "do but as they may, no further dare." All their movements are but an

Emerging with blind gropes from impercipient
By random sequence—luckless, tragic chance.

Of fatalism there is plenty:

Ere systemed suns were globed and lit
The slaughters of the race were writ,
And wasting war by land and sea
Fixed, like all else, immutably.

And we hear a deep complaint against some superworld, which hovers over the misery of this "mud-molded ball."

The whole drama is a presentment of a "mean monstrous ironism." The dynasts, from the forlorn Queen Louise, who begs Napoleon for Magdeburg, to Napoleon himself, are larger types of "time's laughing-stocks." Irony is easily the temperament of Mr. Thomas Hardy. His ironic range, with this great drama added to the novels, is complete. Life's little ironies and its big ones are never absent from his pages. The sinister and the pitying voices are for this reason his strongest dramatic as well as lyric instruments in this arraignment of war. We hear their resounding complaint of the plague of rulers and the pity of the ruled:

Alas! what prayers will save the struggling lands,
Whose lives are ninepins to these bowling hands!

Nothing could be more ironical than a Peace Congress described thus:

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Where every power perpend withal
Its dues as large, its friends as small,
Till Priests of Peace prepare once more
To fight as they have fought before.

Picture after picture enforces the grim irony of war. Soldiers of opposing armies drink from the same stream, grasping hands across the rill before they take each other's lives.

What more could plead the wryness of the times
Than such unstudied piteous pantomimes?

Again are shown soldiers peacefully sleeping by the bivouac
embers,

There to pursue at dawn the dynasts' death game
Unto the ending.

Humorous irony, delightful in the novels, is not lacking in this complete show, which moves from cabinet to camp, from ship to field, stopping on the varied routes to allow the humblest to complain or to approve. These delicious bits are in the best manner of the Wessex peasants, whom Hardy can logically put into this great drama. It is Wessex which is threatened with Napoleon's invasion; Wessex has more than indirect part in the glory of Trafalgar. It is this inherited tradition of Wessex as soldiering ground, which may have urged the most intensely local of novelists into this world-poem in which not Wessex but all England has a part.

How is England to be glorified in a drama which cannot glorify war? This, I think, is its great achievement, that England's full due of glory is given her. She is the arbiter of the great struggle. Her part is becomingly sung or

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chanted, and the spirit of the verse is one with the patriot poetry of England in affirming the right of England to be arbiter; but the whole tone of the drama is so uniformly in the minor key that there is not a single swashbuckling note in the verse. There is no disguising that England's fighting with or against dynasts is bitter business. We are spared any special adjusting of dramatic moments which might appeal to national vanity. A hero like Sir John Moore wins the meed of sincere if not a melodious tear; Nelson's death does not lack the sentiment appropriate to one whose life was deeply sentimental; the most woeful picture of war is reserved for a remnant of the English army left to die on an island in the Scheldt, "in dynasts' discords, not their own." A really epic effect is secured in the battle of Waterloo; an effect beside which Victor Hugo's much quoted chapter is a burden of detail.

There are choruses to sing the power of the English fleet; they are simple and modest in effect, for the victory of England is no occasion for shout or triumph. All is restrained by a deep sense of the sacrifice which victory demands. *The Dynasts* is thus an advance in English patriot poetry; it avoids both the bombast of *Rule, Britannia*, and the apologetic whine which has crept into English patriot verse since the Boer war. The English hate war; no one has expressed its tragic folly so simply as Southey in a child's persistent asking, "What was it all about?" in *The Battle of Blenheim*. Shakespeare satirized soldiering more acutely than Bernard Shaw has done. And this poem of

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England's dear-bought glory should be worth much to England now that she is again paying the price of dynasts' quarrels.

It is worth much to all of us for the prophetic irony interpretative of the present war, which meets one on every page:

Behold again the Dynasts' gory gear;
And people are enmeshed in new calamities—

seems to have been written yesterday. As to prayer for success in battle, Napoleon calls it trying to hire the enginery of heaven.

The transport of the English troops to Spain reads as though it were that of Lord Kitchener's men to France; and these lines are ironically close to the present time:

England is fierce for fighting on—
(Strange humor in a concord-loving land).

There is a hint that nations may sometime settle their disputes "by modern reason and the urbaner sense," but the whole poem is so suffused with a justifiable pessimism that one heeds but little any forward-looking thought that they will ever come to this. At best, the poem sings a kind of august pity that such a madness as war is the story of the ages. To possess one great literary rendering of its stark iniquity may be a prophecy of its doom.

Ellen FitzGerald

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REVIEWS

The Sharing, by Agnes Lee. Sherman, French & Co.

The Congo and Other Poems, by Vachel Lindsay. Macmillan.

Many new books of verse provide convenient handles for the critic—there are easy, ready-made methods of approach, or obvious points of attack, which the harassed reviewer would be blind indeed if he did not seize upon and expand into journalistic material. This, in a sense, is not disadvantageous for the poet in an age when, to get a hearing at all, it is necessary that his work should be presented with some sort of a literary trade-mark or preface in order to attract a public singularly heedless of anything that requires more than superficial attention. But the situation is not favorable for a new book of verse which does not afford the reviewer these easy facilities. Poetry of intrinsic beauty, without any "tag," without a note of ultra-modernity, a defiant use of new form, or the expression of sentiments supposedly revolutionary—this is a difficult thing to define—or to exploit.

The Sharing by Agnes Lee (Mrs. Freer) is a book of this kind. The poet's vision is concentric, rather than excentric. She does not give us a lens through which to view the external world, but a crystal sphere in which to find a world of finer forms and essences. Her work, to borrow a painter's term, has "quality," an attribute that must be felt rather than stated. Her lyrics, to borrow another phrase, this time from an "authoritative" critic in *The Dial*, are

"not easily reducible to any form of intellectual statement." But was there ever any poetry, unless it be Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, that could be reduced to such a formula? If one says of *The Sharing* that the setting free of three caged canaries reveals the moving history of a soul that has itself been caged and broken, one yet misses all the keen delight in liberty, in beautiful, wide, untrammelled spaces, so sensitively suggested in the poem. Clearly, with a book of this sort, the only possibility for the reviewer lies in suggestion also. And the suggestion will not be missed by the reader who cares for something more than superficial cleverness. Among the poems in the book that may be singled out for special mention are *The Sharing*, *The Silent House*, *A Statue in a Garden*, *Song of a Queen of Lombardy*, *The Drudge*, *Numbers*, *Her Going*. This last is a keenly psychological study of jealousy, delicately incisive:

Hard it was to live down the day, and wonder,
Wonder why the tears were forever welling,
Wonder if on his lips her kiss I tasted,
Turning to claim him. . . .

Sharp tongue, have pity! . . .
Yes, I knew. But I loved him, hoping for all.
I said in my heart: "Time shall bring buds to blossom."
Almost I saw the flower of the flame descending.
Then—she came toying.

He is mine, mine, by the law of ages!
Mine, mine, mine—yes, body and spirit!
Glad I am she has gone her way to the shadow.
Hate is upon me.

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Oh, the bar over which my soul would see
All that eludes my soul, while he remembers!
You, dispel if you can my avenging passion!—
Clouds are before me!

Mr. Vachel Lindsay's work presents very little difficulty to the reviewer, except that there are so many different angles from which it may be exploited! There is his creed of optimistic sincerity, and there is his invention of a new choric form adapted to all the strident blaring noises of our blatant life today—for he is no shirker, but an acceptor of all that conventional poets have been wont to decry. Yet, in the process by which poetry is turned into journalistic capital in the reviews, so much of the finer quality of his work is lost, that one is moved to go against the tide and record the subtler shades upon which a deeper enjoyment of his poetry will rest.

In this poet's work there is much that is fanciful, but it is the higher quality of imagination that attracts us in his more serious poems—imagination that is at once concrete and visionary. Even when he seems to be slipping off into some indefinite, incorporeal region of mid-air, it is the unexpected concrete touch that ties us to earth and awakens in us that vivid pleasure of experience which is always the poet's true touchstone. Mr. Lindsay has the mythopoeic faculty. He has converted a fireman's ball, or a group of Salvation Army psalm-singers, into a tribal image. I know that I never see such a group now in North Clark Street that the image of *General William Booth Entering*

Into Heaven does not take possession of my mind; and I never see the fire-engine rushing past that I do not spontaneously recall the symbol of passion that Mr. Lindsay has made of it:

Said the swift white horse
To the swift black horse,
"There goes the alarm—
There goes the alarm."

Even the automobile horn has become as powerfully suggestive as the trumpet that shook the walls of Jericho. That Mr. Lindsay has been able to evoke this image out of certain apparent banalities of our life is no small thing. It is not only a credit to his power, but it argues much for the future of poetry in these states. In this connection it is perhaps well to state that his growth has been peculiarly independent of foreign influence. The suggested similarity between his work and that of the Futurists is merely an interesting parallel. He has perhaps done what Signor Marinetti suggested should be done, but his achievement was not due to Signor Marinetti's suggestion. The record of his growth is apparent, and his groping toward a form that would unite delicacy and strength, and give full play to the choric appeal of mobile, vocal sound, has been followed step by step by his friends. It is characteristic of his personality that his book should include poems of widely dissimilar vein, and even of unequal merit. His inclusion of the *Dirge for a Righteous Kitten* so incensed one serious-minded critic that he refused to consider the volume at all; but I know several small children to whom that poem is as meat and

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drink, and who, with this as a starting-point, have quickly assimilated all the deep round vowel sounds and rolling bass of *The Congo* as well as the light graceful step of *Judith the Dancer*—again not a bad thing for the future of poetry in these states!

But it must not be thought that Mr. Lindsay's muse is merely the muse of rag-time. It is true that he has molded and remolded his vehicle to fit the voice, but the lasting power of his verse is, as I have suggested, in its power to evoke an image. The effect of the image is increased through every means at his disposal—by his selection of sounds, of words, and his hypnotic use of the refrain. Many of the poems are too well known to need quotation; *The Fireman's Ball*, *The Santa Fé Trail*, and several others, have been published in POETRY. *The Congo*, his impressionist poem of the negro temperament, is published for the first time. This is, of course, too long to quote, but the heading of one section, *Their Irrepressible High Spirits*, reminds me forcefully of a certain quality of Mr. Lindsay's work that should not go unremarked—its "high spirits." This in itself is characteristically American, but this is probably the first time that we have found it turned to account in American verse not manifestly light or comic.

I have often thought that translations of certain modern European dramas do not appeal to our audiences because of a difference in temperament rather than because of any definite hostility to a form of drama fine in itself; and that when our young playwrights attempt the art they curiously

enough shroud themselves in an imitative black coat of despair which is alike unnatural to them and to their audiences. Whatever else our American temperament may be, it is not bowed down by weight of woe, and doesn't want to be. In giving rein to his naturally high spirits, and in frankly combining the sincere with the light or even frivolous, it may be that Mr. Lindsay is far more instinctively national than we suspect. Those who look for the finesse of out-worn European models in his work may not find it; but they will find something that is abundantly alive and vital, and destined to live by the inherent force of this vitality.

A. C. H.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

Boston is discovering Imagism! The Houghton-Mifflin Company will soon publish Miss Lowell's new anthology of certain members of the group, and so we find Mr. Ferris Greenslet presenting "their creed, their Kensington catechism," to readers of *The New Republic* in the course of his review of Miss Lowell's latest book.

It is all very interesting, even if Mr. Greenslet needs a few more lessons in his catechism. But, strangely enough, he quite forgets to mention that POETRY discovered the imagist poets over two years ago, and printed their creed with apostolic exactness in March, 1913, in Mr. Flint's article *Imagisme*, followed by Mr. Pound's *Don'ts by an Imagist*. Mr. Greenslet forgets also to mention Mr. Pound,

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whose early authority and present vitality in the school Miss Lowell, editor of the coming anthology, would be the last to deny. Indeed, probably no one regrets more than she that he will not be represented in it.

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Congratulations to Miss Margaret C. Anderson, editor of *The Little Review*, upon the completion of the first year of her high-stepping charger! May it spurn the ground and sniff the air and champ the bit for many years to come, and never quite throw its rider!

We commend the spirit of Miss Anderson's editorial, *Our First Year*. She tells how she was once trained by a "veteran editor" to be "efficient" in his business, told how she must print the poor but respectable stuff, and send back the good but disturbing, until "I used to feel that I was in the midst of some demoniacal scheme for achieving the ultimate futility." And so she resolves against an "editorial policy," for it is "likely to be, or to become, quite a damning thing." And thus she throws down her gauge of battle:

In the face of new magazines of excellent quality and no personality we shall continue to soar and flash and flame, to be swamped at intervals and scramble to new heights, to be young and fearless and reckless and imaginative—

*Rêver, rire, passer, être seul, chanter,
Avoir l'oeil qui regarde bien, la voix qui vibre—*

to die for these things if necessary, but to live for them vividly first.

NOTES

Mr. Ezra Pound's propensity for languages has led him of late to approach Chinese lyrics through study of the late Ernest Fenollosa's manuscripts, with the co-operation of oriental scholars. Like other delvers into this field, he is convinced of the supreme beauty of old Chinese poetry, and of its future value as an inspiring force in occidental culture.

Li Po, called in Japan Rihaku, was a vagabond genius of the eighth century. After years of wandering with other tippling "Idlers of the Bamboo Grove," he was received as a "banished angel" by one of the T'ang emperors, and encouraged to make merry at court. Falling a victim to intrigue at last, he left in disgrace, and, after more years of vagabondage, was drowned by leaning too far over the edge of a boat in a tipsy effort to embrace the image of the moon.

A volume of Mr. Pound's recent poems will soon be published in London.

Mr. Arthur Davison Ficke, of Davenport, Iowa, author of *Mr. Faust*, *Twelve Japanese Painters*, and other books of verse, needs no introduction to our readers. Nor do Fannie Stearns Davis, (Mrs. A. McK. Gifford) of Pittsfield, Mass., whose *Crack o' Dawn* (Macmillan) is just out, and Mrs. Eunice Tietjens, of Chicago, whose first book of poems will soon be issued by Mr. Kennerley. H. D., an American imagist living in London, has also appeared in POETRY.

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Miss Moireen Fox, of Dublin, is a young Irish poet who has contributed to British reviews and will soon publish a volume.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- The Song of Roland*, translated into English Verse by Leonard Bacon. Yale University Press.
- Songs of Kabir*, translated by Rabindranath Tagore: Introduction by Evelyn Underhill. India Society, London.
- Shakespeare Study Programmes: The Tragedies*, by Charlotte Porter and Helen A. Clarke. Richard G. Badger, Boston.
- Antwerp*, by Ford Madox Hueffer. The Poetry Bookshop, London.
- Arrows in the Gale*, by Arturo Giovannitti. Frederick C. Bursch, Hillacre Book-house, Riverside, Conn.
- New Poems*, by Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Macmillan.
- The Olive Tree*, by L. Leigh Mudge. The Methodist Book Concern, New York.
- Hé alethia, the Enl de Retsac Series*. The Harvey E. Nelson Press, Petaluma, Cal.
- The Conquest*, by Richard Osborne. The Gorham Press.
- Crack O' Dawn*, by Fannie Stearns Davis. Macmillan.
- Green Days and Blue Days*, by Patrick R. Chalmers. The Norman Remington Co., Baltimore.
- Broad-Sheet Ballads*, Being a Collection of Irish Popular Songs. With an Introduction by Padraic Colum. The Norman Remington Co., Baltimore.
- An Epilogue, and Other Poems*, by Seumas O'Sullivan. The Norman Remington Co.
- Rhymes of Little Folks*, by Burges Johnson. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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—*Literary Digest, February 13, 1915.*

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CHICAGO

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by
Harriet Monroe

Errata:

- Page 19, line 4 from bottom—for *bend* read *bent*.
Page 22, last line of poem—for *Some brandy!* read *Some brandy, sir!*
Page 39—insert space, to indicate end of poem, after the line:
You also are laid aside.
Page 97—for lines 17 and 18 substitute:
*Miss Marian Ramié is a young English poet who has worked more
or less for the wounded.*
Page 147—for lines 6 and 7 substitute:
*Mr. Seumas O'Sullivan is an Irish poet, author of several brief books of
verse, from which Thomas B. Mosher, of Portland, Maine, has published
a selection.*
Page 169—first line of poem omitted. Insert:
Long time my mother lived in Culm.
This error is corrected also on page 249.

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Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

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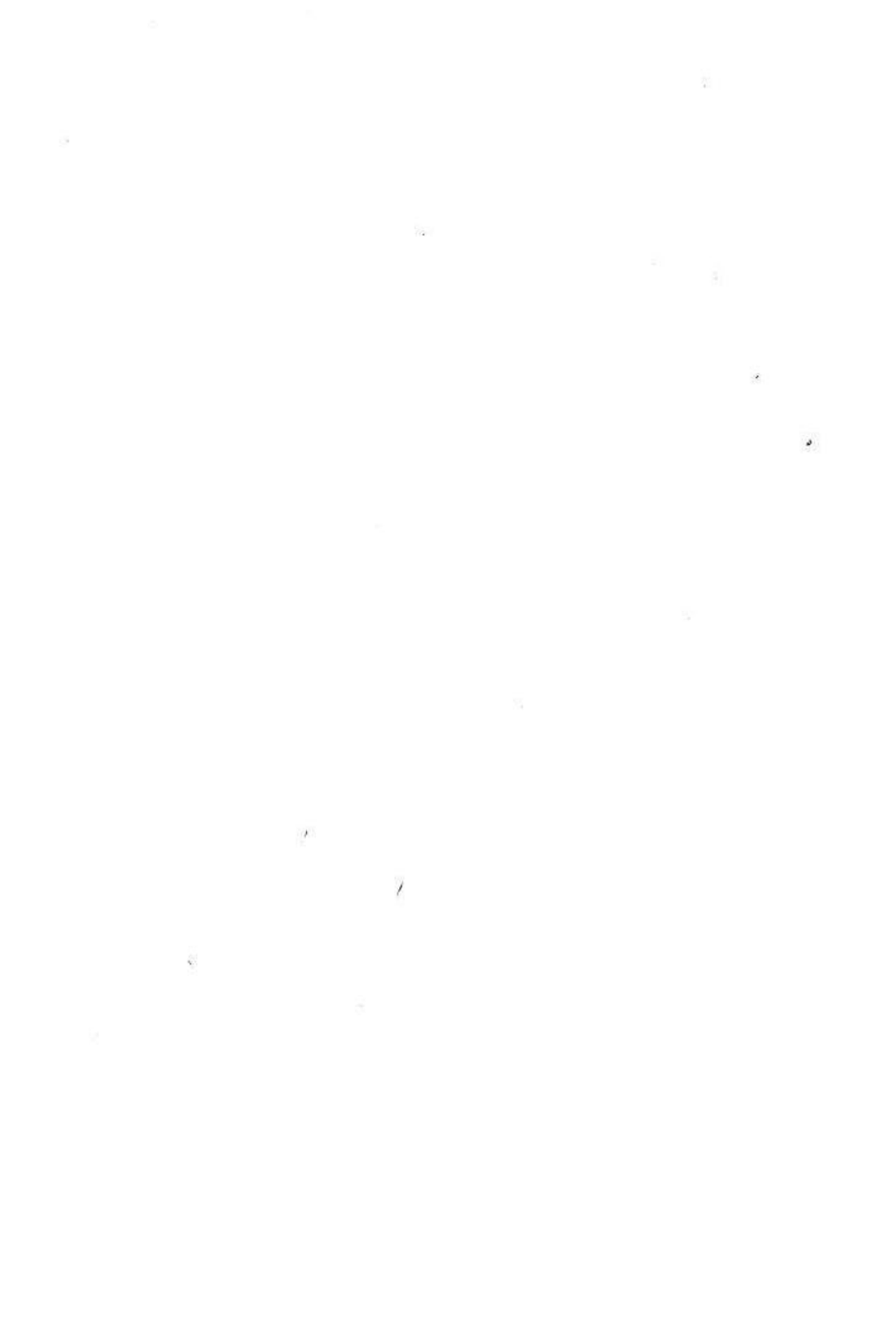
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POETRY
A MAGAZINE OF VERSE
VOLUME V



To have great ports
there must be great audiences too.

—Whitman.